

Hafa Adai!

Drought conditions continue across the CNMI. **PAGE 2**

'Stimulus' now excluded as resource for NAP beneficiaries. **PAGE 5**

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2 more recoveries in NMI

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

After a week with zero new coronavirus case in the CNMI, two more persons were added to the CNMI's recovered patients list, raising the total number of recoveries to 15.

Although there was no official pronouncement about the new recoveries, the Com-

monwealth Healthcare Corp.'s website posted on Saturday, See 2 MORE on Page 4

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:

- Red: Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- Green: Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

Help underway for NMI residents stuck in PH

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

Medical referral patients stuck in the Philippines may soon be able to return to the

CNMI following the Philippine Airlines' resumption of flights to Guam beginning June 12, Friday.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, CNMI medical

patients and their escorts have remained stuck in the Philippines, and have been waiting for the airlines to resume operations.

See HELP Page 4

COVID-19 hampers IPI construction progress

» Excavation started for reburial of hundreds of ancestral remains

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The COVID-19 pandemic is having a vast impact on the construction progress of Imperial Pacific International

(CNMI) LLC's casino/resort project in Garapan, according to IPI vice president of construction Eric Poon.

Poon reported at the Commonwealth Casino Commission meeting on Friday, June 1, 2020, that the project is still on track. See COVID-19 Page 4

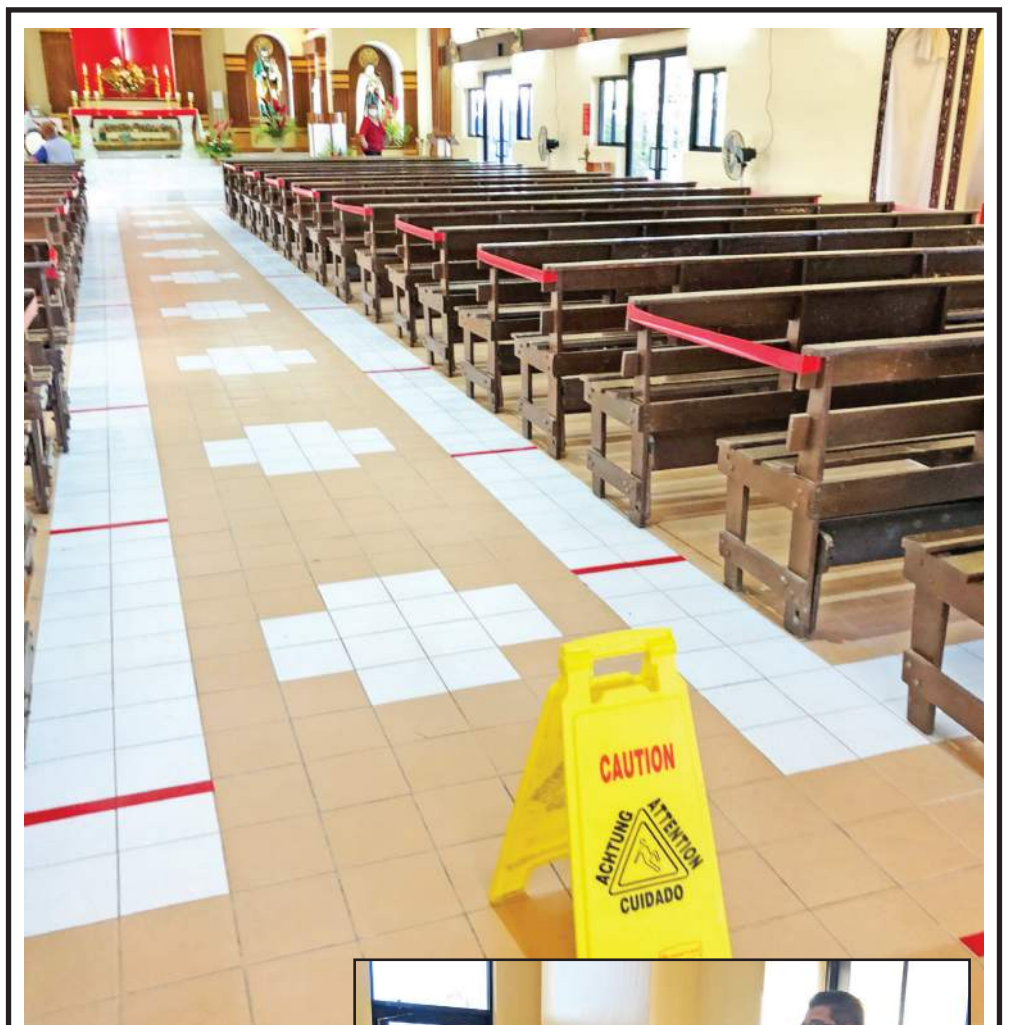
Getting the welcome mat ready for a new normal

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

With flights having resumed between Guam and Saipan, about 99% of those entering

the CNMI are returning residents and the remaining 1% are contractors, according to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, who disclosed this in a news brief-

See GETTING Page 4



NEW NORMAL

The pews at the San Antonio Parish church are marked off to ensure that parishioners who attend the Mass in person will comply with social distancing guidelines. Other photo shows that, before a Mass begins, parishioners must have their masks on and they will have to sign in first for contact tracing purposes and have their temperatures checked before being seated by an usher. Hand sanitizers are also provided.

KRIZEL TUAZON



AT A GLANCE

As of 6pm, May 31, 2020

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	172	1	173
Recovered	143	+1	144
Active	23	+1	24
Deaths	6*	0	6*

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	22	0	22
Recovered	13	2	15
Active	7	-2	5
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested**		6,173	

*Total includes a sailor from the USS Theodore Roosevelt.

**Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

INSIDE



BUSINESS

Enjoy a cold drink while watching the sun go down once again at Oleai Beach Bar & Grill.

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NATION

The protests sweeping across U.S. cities is fueling fears of a surge in coronavirus cases.

PAGE 12



WORLD

China says the U.S. decision on Hong Kong is "gross interference" that is "doomed to fail."

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Local

Drought conditions continue across the CNMI

There have been some improvement to the drought situation across Yap, the northern islands of Chuuk and the northern part of the Marshalls but it appears the CNMI still has a few more days of drought conditions ahead of it.

According to a National Weather Service forecast that was released Friday by the Emergency Operations Center-State Warning Point in the CNMI, drought conditions could still worsen across the CNMI the next couple weeks

as less-than-adequate rainfall is expected.

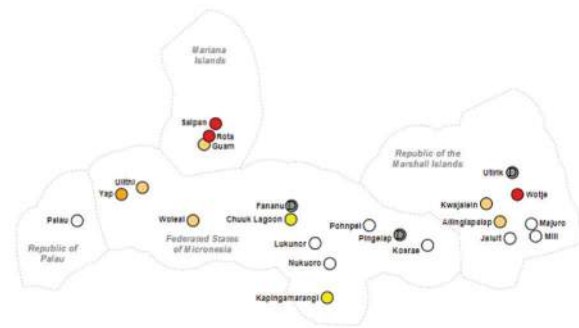
However, it added that officials report water levels are still above thresholds for concern.

It said that the CNMI has been anchored in a very dry trade-wind pattern for several months now. As assessed by the U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands-U.S. Drought Monitor team, Saipan's Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport has had the driest May, April-May, March-May, Feb-

ruary-May and January-May on record.

Numerical models indicate only a half inch to an inch of rain is expected on Rota, Tinian and Saipan over the next 10 days. Other than spotty, light showers, a couple weak disturbances will be the main source for showers.

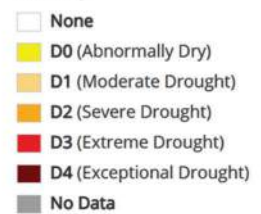
A weak disturbance this last weekend of May, and another toward the end of next week could bring much-needed showers to the Marianas. Models still place more rain-



Map released: Thurs. May 28, 2020

Data valid: May 26, 2020 at 8 a.m. EDT

Intensity:



fall to the south over Guam, but with 10-day totals only around an inch. Depending on the evolution of these weak disturbances and any upper-level support, some areas could see locally higher amounts of rainfall.

In Guam, weak disturbances have provided showers for the island recently, with above normal rainfall occurring during the month of May 2020.

On other parts of the Pacific, a wet trade-wind pattern continues to provide steady

showers to islands between 4N and 8N across the region. Showers are gradually returning to islands near 10N with the northward shift in low-level convergence and the seasonal return of the tropical upper-tropospheric trough. (PR)

Fuel adjustment charge remains the same for June

The Fuel Adjustment Charge remains at \$0.08323 per kilowatt-hour for the month of June, according to the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. in a statement last Friday.

Although there has been a slight increase in the Mean of Platts Singapore, or MOPS, monthly pricing from May 2020 to June 2020 as notified by Mobil Oil Mariana Islands, Inc., the increase did not equal or exceed a 4.5% differential of the average per gallon cost of fuel.

The FAC is one of two components that make up the CUC electric kWh rate, which is used to purchase fuel. The second component is the CUC base rate, which is used to fund operations, projects, and debt service. This base rate has not been increased since April 17, 2014.

CUC is required, pursuant to an order previously issued by the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission, to adjust (up or down) the FAC pass-through rate when the

MOPS monthly pricing equals or exceeds a 4.5% differential of the average per gallon cost of fuel used in the calculation of the current FAC rate.

CUC first instituted the levelized energy adjustment clause in 2009 to recover fuel and fuel related costs, a system also used by power providers in Guam and the Virgin Islands. In May 2015, the CPUC authorized CUC to change the name of LEAC to FAC to provide customers a more accurate description of the electric rate. (PR)

Inmate gets 30 days added to his 25-year sentence

Sylvestre Rogopes Sablan, who is serving a 25-year prison term for killing his wife, was slapped Thursday with another 30-day prison sentence for assaulting a fellow inmate at the Department of Corrections in Susupe.

Sablan, 48, pleaded guilty to assault and battery as part of a plea deal and was sentenced

to the full maximum 30-day imprisonment, to run consecutive to the prison term he is currently serving in the murder case. This means he will serve a total of 25 years plus 30 days in prison.

According to the plea agreement, Sablan hit Godfrey Sablan Mendiola on Sept. 10, 2019, in the face. Mendiola is

serving an eight-year prison term for sexually abusing a 16-year-old girl on Tinian in 2017.

Assistant public defender Jean Pierre Nogues served as counsel for Sablan. Assistant attorney general Chester Hinds appeared for the government. (Ferdie de la Torre)

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Judge will hear IPI's motion to suspend execution of \$6.9M judgment

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona granted last week Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC's request to hear its motion to stay the execution of the court's \$6.9-million judgment in favor of IPI's former contractor pending a resolution of IPI's appeal of that ruling.

Meanwhile, at a status conference Thursday in a separate lawsuit filed by seven former workers against IPI, Manglona ordered IPI to pay per day the \$2,000 sanction to the court from May 17 until such time it files certification of full compliance that the sanctions order is satisfied.

On Wednesday, Manglona set the hearing on IPI's motion to stay the execution of judgment for this Thursday, June 4, at 9:30am.

Pacific Rim Land Development LLC was allowed to submit any the motion to oppose the stay by today, Monday. If it does, IPI is given until Wednesday, June 3, to reply.

Manglona extended to Thursday, June 4, the automatic stay of the court's judgment.

IPI, through counsel Michael W. Dotts, said if Pacific Rim begins to collect on the \$6.9-million judgment, IPI will not be able to make payroll or pay taxes. IPI currently has 1,066 employees, mostly working on the construction of its hotel.

Pacific Rim obtained last April 27 a judgment for breach of contract in excess of \$6.8 million against IPI and was allowed begin executing on the judgment last Tuesday, May 26. Last Thursday, U.S. District Court for the NMI clerk of court

Heather L. Kennedy amended the judgment, increasing the amount to \$6,909,333, including interests and costs. IPI has appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit to reverse the judgment, but lacks the ability to pay for a bond.

Dotts said IPI has identified about \$9 million worth of real property leases that it can mortgage to Pacific Rim to secure payment of the judgment pending appeal. IPI asked the court to be allowed a stay of proceedings pending appeal.

Last Tuesday, Manglona denied without prejudice IPI's first request to shorten time to hear IPI's motion to stay. That means the court does not prohibit IPI from raising the same issue in the future. IPI then re-filed the request.

Last Wednesday, Pacific

Rim, through counsel Colin Thompson, filed an application for writ of execution before the federal court that will direct the U.S. Marshal to seize IPI's money from several banks in an amount not to exceed \$5.65 million. Pacific Rim asked the court to issue the writ of execution to transfer money owned or controlled by IPI from the Bank of Saipan, City Trust Bank, Bank of Guam, and First Hawaiian Bank to be held in the court's registry or account until after a hearing on exemptions, if any.

Pacific Rim is suing IPI and five unnamed alleged co-conspirators, claiming that IPI owes it payment for the work that it did on the casino/resort project. IPI has filed counter-

claims against Pacific Rim for promissory fraud, fraud in the inducement as to the promissory note, violation of Consumer Protection Act, and breach of contract.

With respect to the seven former workers' lawsuit, Manglona's order last April 16 found IPI in civil contempt for violating the court's two orders regarding discovery in connection with the lawsuit filed against IPI and two others by the seven former workers.

Manglona granted the former workers' motion to sanction IPI. She informed the parties in this case that if IPI fails to comply with the deadlines ordered that day, April 16, 2020, a monetary sanction of \$2,000 a day will be imposed

until IPI complies.

The judge ordered IPI to file a certification of compliance to avoid sanctions.

The plaintiffs, who are now based in China, are suing IPI and its contractor, MCC International Saipan Ltd. Co., and subcontractor, Gold Mantis Construction Decoration (CNMI) LLC, over the alleged injuries they suffered during accidents at the worksite of IPI's casino/resort project in Garapan.

The plaintiffs alleged, among other things, that they were forced to work long hours for below minimum wage under extremely dangerous conditions at the casino-resort worksite.

IPI has denied the allegations. **(Ferdie De La Torre)**

Water service interruption in Kagman

There will be a scheduled water service interruption this Wednesday, June 3, 2020, from 8am to 4pm for the entire Kagman area.

The purpose of the scheduled water interruption is due to a 14-inch distribution water line leak located on Cha Cha Road in Kagman near the Kagman Cemetery.

Water operations personnel of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. are scheduled to start their repairs on

Wednesday, June 3, at 8am and anticipate completion by 4pm. Water service to the affected areas will resume soon after.

For the safety of the men and women at the jobsite, motorists are advised to take alternative routes or proceed with caution when passing the south bound shoulder lane.

CUC urges customers in these areas to fill up their back up water storage tanks and continue to practice wa-

ter conservation during the dry season. Please contact the CUC Customer Call Center to report leaks for repairs.

CUC continues to work diligently to minimize any inconvenience to its customers. For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor its Facebook page for the latest updates (<https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/>). **(PR)**

Free webinars on contracting with federal govt

The Guam Procurement Technical Assistance Center is offering free live webinars every Tuesday and Thursday in June. Webinars run from 10am to 11am and will be conducted via Zoom. Links to the live webinar and the webinar evaluation will be emailed to all registered attendees 15 minutes before the start of the webinar.

■ June 2: Federal Contract Opportunities – Beta.sam.gov is the new portal for federal contract opportunities. The Guam PTAC will show you how to set up an account and how to use the search filters to ensure you do not miss any opportunities.

■ June 4: Capabilities Statement – A Capabilities Statement is an essential marketing tool for government contracting. The Guam PTAC will explain how to create a CS and what information should be included to improve your chances of winning a government contract.

■ June 9: Marketing to the Federal Government – The government buys products and services differently than the private sector. The Guam PTAC will discuss marketing strategies, essential documents, and how to get your company on "the list".

■ June 11: Responding to Requests for Proposals – The

Guam PTAC will walk participants through the common sections and clauses of an RFP as well as provide tips on developing a proposal in response to an RFP.

■ June 16: SBIR/STTR Programs – The Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer programs encourage small businesses to engage in federal research and development that has the potential for commercialization. We will explain the programs and show how innovators can get involved.

■ June 18: Service Contract Act – The Service Contract Act requires contractors and subcontractors performing services on prime contracts in excess of \$2,500 to pay service employees prevailing wages. We will discuss the details of the SCA and how contractors can stay in compliance.

■ June 23: Buy American Act – The Buy American Act can be frustrating for government contractors. The Guam PTAC will discuss the BAA and offer some guidance on how to stay in compliance.

■ June 25: Essential Government Websites – Much of government contracting is done online. The Guam PTAC will discuss the various, essential websites vendors need

to be familiar with to have a better chance for success in government contracting.

Register on the website, <http://guamptac.com/news-and-events.php>. **(PR)**

After being chosen by a panel of local artists, the artwork of Mount Carmel School sophomore YuJeong Son is the winner of the 12th annual Northern Marianas Congressional Art Competition.

This was learned via Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan's digital newsletter, e-Kilili, issued over the weekend. Sablan's office sponsors the local leg of the annual competition.

As the CNMI contest winner, Son's artwork, Dream in the Mariana Sea, will be displayed over the coming year at the U.S. Capitol alongside the artwork from congressional districts all across the nation.

"Thank you to all the young artists who entered this year. And congratulations, YuJeong," said Sablan said in e-Kilili. **(Saipan Tribune)**



Mount Carmel School sophomore YuJeong Son is the winner of the 12th annual Northern Marianas Congressional Art Competition with her entry called Dream in the Mariana Sea. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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PSS to retire over \$1.8M deficit

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The Public School System is in the process of retiring a deficit of \$1,827,802 this fiscal year in preparation for the upcoming school year and fiscal year.

During a special Board of Education meeting last Friday, PSS acting director of Finance Kimo Rosario reported that PSS' current mission is retiring this fiscal year's deficit that they have accrued and use any leftover funding to prepare for school year 2020-2021.

Rosario added that any leftover funding that PSS has after retiring their debt will cushion their budget for next fiscal year because PSS expects a significantly lower budget compared to previous years.

"[We plan] to carry forward all those proceeds until next fiscal year to augment the subsequent fiscal year budget and mitigate a financial impact of either a \$19 million or \$16 million budget that will be

approved for PSS next fiscal year," he said.

To date, PSS has retired their debt with teachers and staff for pay period 9 and 10, which totaled \$647,623.19. PSS has also retired \$233,882.18 it owed its contractors for various projects. The money used to pay off debt to contractors, Rosario explained, was from the appropriation from the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation under Saipan Local Law 20-10.

As of Dec. 31, 2019, Rosario said, the Department of Finance has transferred to PSS \$485,000 of the \$745,000 appropriation under Saipan Local Law 21-10. Of the \$485,000, \$250,000 was allocated to Hopwood Middle School, \$150,000 was allocated to William S. Reyes Elementary School, and the remaining \$85,000 to all remaining schools covered by the law.

"To date, \$233,882.18 has been expended and fully paid. We don't

owe any contractors, thereby keeping a balance of \$251,167.82 in the bank. The CNMI government, through the Department of Finance, has yet to transfer \$260,000 to complete the \$745,000 appropriation," he said.

PSS is still working on retiring outstanding local accounts payable totaling \$946,297.06 with its Office of Federal Programs.

"Currently, our office is working with the Federal Programs Office on retiring local account payables, which now stands at \$946,297.06. Once we settle this debt, PSS will effectively retire its deficit for this fiscal year," he said.

PSS has also paid off outstanding utility billings that totaled \$723,828.31.

Additionally, PSS has also fully settled its Group Health Life Insurance and withholding tax debt with the CNMI government totaling \$3.6 million, \$2.2 million for life insurance, and the remaining \$1.4 million for Chapter 2 and

Chapter 7 taxes.

"Because we were able to settle this debt with the government, the government will then resume allotments based on the most recent

revised budget, which is roughly over \$400,000 biweekly. Total savings if we maintain furlough would be \$3.9 million that we can use for next fiscal year," he said.

2 MORE

From Page 1

May 30, that the number of recovered persons went up from 13 to 15. Citing privacy laws, CHCC declined to release more details about the affected persons but assured that it continues to evaluate all patients who are in isolation at the Kanoa Resort in Susupe once they are admitted, then reassesses and reevaluates them before making the decision to release and mark individuals as "recovered."

Saipan Tribune learned that CHCC has enlisted the help of six lab scientists from South Korea to increase their testing output. The lab scientists originally came to the CNMI to ensure that the testing machine the CNMI obtained from Seoul is working properly. With their help, CHCC expects to be able to process more tests and come out with the results at a faster rate.

Widened testing

With plans now in place to bring the mass testing into the community, Warren Villagomez, who chairs the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, said they will be basing the widened effort to conduct mass testing on the data that they already have at the current mass testing site. Right now, mass testing is being done at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

"We are going back to the data from what we're doing at the airport and that would give us the guideline on which community we're going to

be going into first," said Villagomez.

He said that there are a couple areas that the task force wants to penetrate first to protect and minimize the risk and spread of COVID-19. "We will be coming up with a plan and providing information to the media shortly, and working along with our press information officer from the governor's office," said Villagomez.

Additionally, CHCC chief executive office Esther Muña stated that CHCC has done some community outreach and has reached out to Home Health Services to help test their clients. "We're working with the Home Health Services and their patients that they're seeing and making sure that they are able to test those and their family," she said.

Muña has reached out to churches to see if they're willing to open their doors and their congregations.

To date, the CNMI has 22 confirmed cases, with 15 recoveries, two deaths, and five active cases.

COVID-19 in Guam

The Department of Public Health and Social Services tested 145 individuals over the weekend from May 28 to May 30 for COVID-19. One tested positive for COVID-19 and 144 tested negative.

DPHSS tested:

- 64 individuals on May 28
- 77 individuals on May 29
- 6 individuals on May 30

To date, Guam has a total of 173 confirmed COVID-19 cases, with five deaths, 144 released from isolation, and 24 active cases.

COVID-19

From Page 1

sion's board meeting last Thursday that they are short of skilled labor and unable to schedule manufacturing technicians/inspectors to come to Saipan because of flight suspensions and quarantine restrictions.

As for their H2B workers' visas, Poon said ongoing visa interview process remains unchanged as U.S. embassies have not released any further information. U.S. embassies worldwide suspended all ongoing H2B visa interviews until further notice due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

For construction, Poon said that IPI currently has 350 H2B workers and 120 workers from local manpower

agencies, for a total of 470 workers. In addition, they have 15 on the management staff side. Of the 350 H2B workers, 125 are Mongolians; 105 are Taiwanese; 89 are Turkish; 28 are Australians; and three are Thai nationals.

Poon disclosed that IPI and the Historic Preservation Office are aiming to complete the reburial of the ancestral remains next month, July. He said the excavation of the site where hundreds of ancestral remains will be reburied has already started.

As for the hotel tower, Poon said interior fit-out work is in progress at levels 3 to 13, while exterior steel subframe installation is also in progress at Level 14. He said waterproofing installation has been completed at level 15 Zone A, while waterproofing installation at

Zone C is still in progress.

This month, Poon said, Alimak elevator on elevation I (south) and tower crane No. 4 are scheduled for disassembly.

The resort hotel or the 14 villas have already been completed.

He said Phase 2 construction at level 3 to 13 at the tower hotel is in progress and is expected to be completed on June 30, 2020.

Poon said Phase 3 construction at Level 2 VIP gaming and Level 14 sky level started in June 2019 and is targeted to be completed on Sept. 30, 2020.

He said the beach club construction started in October 2019 and is expected to be completed on Dec. 31, 2020.

The meeting was held via video conference.

GETTING

From Page 1

ing last Friday.

Specifically, Torres said that the contractors are either from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the U.S. Department of Defense, or are here to assist the Commonwealth in its COVID-19 operations.

The COVID-19 Task Force, with the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., is also implementing measures to ensure that all incoming passengers go through the required protocols in terms of quarantine and testing, before they are reintegrated with the community.

Warren Villagomez, who chairs the COVID-19 Task Force, said that screenings are in place at entry points in all the CNMI's ports. "We have a point-of-entry task force group that gets pre-flight information on a daily basis," Villagomez said, "and we're continuing all the protocol on screening at entry points...with close coordination with Star Marianas on all inbound,

especially the Guam flights."

"All inbound are being treated the same as United [Airlines], as well as airport and seaport," he added.

In addition, the task force has also put in requests for thermal scanners, not just for entry points at the airport, but for government offices and other critical active sites in the CNMI. These will be in addition to the thermal scanner that the Commonwealth Ports Authority had already purchased.

"Early on, during this response, the CPA procured a thermal scanner. We have the scanner up at the airport active for inbound passengers right now. That is being used at the airport and ready for additional airline arrivals, but we are working on procuring [more]," Villagomez said.

In addition, the government is also working with its private partners to purchase thermal scanners for hotels.

"We're working now with the new norm for restaurants and other facilities, even the government. We are doing everything we can to make sure that our tourists, as well as our residents, feel comfortable when they go

to places," the governor said.

The government has targeted July 15 as the day—albeit a moving target date—for the CNMI to reopen to tourists. With the island currently on vulnerability scale Yellow, restaurants and businesses have been slowly reopening too, for the community, with social distancing and sanitation directives in place.

"As we roll out our tourism [industry] and reopen [the] CNMI on July 15, this month [May] and next month [June] is a testament on how our community, our private partners, our health care providers, how are we dealing with our returning residents and our community itself," Torres said.

"From now to July 15, our business partners, our tourism industry will see whether the CNMI is ready to receive our tourist partners. For the next two months, we'll do everything we can to work with our private partners to understand the new norm so that when the tourism comes, we welcome them [knowing] the new normal, [that is] social distancing, and so forth," he added.

HELP

From Page 1

"We have our patients on a reserved ticket," Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said during the a radio press briefing last Friday. "The first flight out, we do have our patients that are eligible to come back on standby."

The governor acknowledged that it is unfortunate that there are no international flights out of the Philippines, and assured the patients and escorts stuck in the country, that funds are reserved for them for the flights that are available.

"Again, the first flight out will be definitely booked, but we're trying our very best to get everybody that's eligible and that can travel to come back home," he said.

Torres also revealed that he, too, has a family member who is unable to return to the CNMI either, and that he feels for all the patients and escorts who cannot return home. "But they also got to stay safe and continue to practice social distancing over there. ...I do feel for

them. I want them to continue to be strong. We are doing everything we can to make sure that they get back home safe, on the first flight out, or what is available."

He did not specify how many CNMI residents are stranded in Manila.

In a statement, Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) said that the U.S. State Department has worked hard to help set up special flights and provide information on how to get special travel documents needed during the pandemic.

"U.S. citizens and green card holders from the Marianas are strongly encouraged to contact the American embassy in Manila, informing them of their presence in the Philip-

pines and providing information on how they could be reached in case plans to reopen flights are made, or for other assistance," Sablan added.

Northern Marianas constituents who need further assistance or information are also advised to contact their medical referral liaison or write Sablan at kilili@mail.house.gov.



Torres

'Stimulus' now excluded as resource for NAP beneficiaries

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service has granted the CNMI's request for a waiver to exclude the treatment of "stimulus payments" as resources for Nutrition Assistance Program participants.

Previously, the NAP sought for clarity on stimulus payments because certain provisions in NAP differ from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Stimulus payments was regarded as a form of non-recurring lump sum payment. As a result, the NAP Office issued a press release on May 27, 2020, reminding households to report changes in their resources, as stated in provisions governing the CNMI NAP program under the NMI Administrative Code.

Money received in the form of a non-recurring lump sum payment shall be counted as resources in the month received unless specifically excluded from consideration as resources by other federal law. This is a NAP provision under § 55-30-130 (c)(5) of the NMI Administrative Code. Additionally, under § 55-30-250 (Household Responsibility to Report Changes) the adult head of household or its authorized representative is required to report changes in circumstances such as changes in income, household size, residence, and resources to its assigned eligibility worker within ten days after effect of the change.

As a reconsideration, the NAP Office sought a waiver from the USDA-FNS Western

Region to exclude stimulus payments from the resources reporting requirement. The Western Region office immediately responded to the NAP request and approved the waiver. As a result, the

stimulus payments that NAP households received will not be regarded as resources and are not required to be reported to the NAP office.

"This is welcome news," said Community and Cul-

tural Affairs Secretary Robert Hunter, "and we are glad that we are able to get clarity on this as we continue to assist families during this pandemic. We are grateful to Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres, Lt. Gov. Arnold

I. Palacios, [NAP] director Walter Macaranas, and the hardworking staff at the NAP office for their commitment to making sure we help every eligible family during these unprecedented times." (PR)

USCIS resumes premium processing for certain petitions

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has announced that it will resume premium processing for Form I-129, Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker and Form I-140, Immigrant Petition for Alien Workers, in phases this month.

Effective today, June 1, 2020, USCIS will accept Form I-907, Request for Premium Processing Service for all eligible Form I-140 petitions.

Effective June 8, USCIS will accept premium processing requests for:

- H-1B petitions filed before June 8 that are pending adjudication and are cap-exempt (for example, petitions filed by petitioners that are cap-exempt and petitions filed for beneficiaries previously counted toward the numerical allocations).

- All other Form I-129 petitions (non H-1B petitions) for nonimmigrant classifications eligible for premium processing filed before June 8 that are pending adjudication.

- Effective June 15, USCIS plans on resuming premium processing for:

- H-1B petitions requesting premium processing by filing an I-907 concurrently with their I-129 (or request for a

petition filed on or after June 8) and are exempt from the cap because:

- The employer is cap-exempt or because the beneficiary will be employed at a qualifying cap-exempt institution, entity or organization (such as an institution of higher education, a nonprofit research organization or a governmental research organization); or

- The beneficiary is cap-exempt based on a Conrad/IGA waiver under INA section 214(l).

- Effective June 22, USCIS plans on resuming premium processing for all other Form I-129 petitions, including:

- All H-1B cap-subject

petitions (including those for fiscal year 2021), including change of status from F-1 nonimmigrant status, for both premium processing upgrades and concurrently filed I-907s.

- All other Form I-129 petitions for nonimmigrant classifications eligible for premium processing and requesting premium processing by filing an I-907 concurrently with their I-129.

All dates are subject to change as USCIS continues to take on more premium processing requests and USCIS will announce any changes to these dates accordingly.

On March 20, USCIS an-

nounced the temporary suspension of premium processing for all Form I-129 and I-140 petitions due to the coronavirus (COVID-19). USCIS continues to process any petition with a previously accepted Form I-907, in accordance with the premium processing service criteria. Petitioners who had already filed Form I-129 or Form I-140 using the premium processing service before the March 20 suspension, but received no action and a refund, may refile their Form I-907 consistent with the timeline above, barring any changes USCIS may announce in the future. (PR)

US, FAS lay groundwork on Compact negotiations

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Department of the Interior representatives held initial consultations last week with teams from each of the Freely Associated States to organize talks around the bilateral review of expiring provisions of the Compacts of Free Association with the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.

The U.S. negotiating team is led by Assistant Secretary, Insular and International Affairs, Douglas W. Domenech and U.S. Department of State Ambassador Karen B. Stewart.

"We are pleased to begin these important discussions with the FSM, the RMI, and with Palau," said Domenech. "Despite challenges due to the coronavirus pandemic, we have been able to lay the groundwork for successful negotiations and establish a notional schedule with the goal of concluding negotiations by the end of this year."

"Our Compacts with the RMI, the FSM, and Palau support a free and open Indo-Pacific. These discussions will strengthen our already deep bilateral relationships and rich people-to-people ties," said Stewart.

On May 21, 2019, President Donald J. Trump met with Palau President Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr., then-RMI President Hilda C. Heine, and FSM President David W. Panuelo in the White House for an historic visit. This was the first time that all three FAS leaders were hosted together at the White House by a U.S. President, demonstrating the special partnership between the United States and the FAS. The FAS presidents also met

with State Secretary Michael R. Pompeo, then-acting secretary of Defense Patrick M. Shanahan, and Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert Wilkie among other high-level U.S. officials. Interior Secretary David Bernhardt also met with the three presidents during their visit to Washington, D.C. in affirmation of the unique role and responsibilities Interior holds in these relationships.

On Aug. 5, 2019, Pompeo announced negotiations with the FSM, RMI, and Palau during an historic visit to Pohnpei where he met with Panuelo, Heine, and Palau Vice President Raynold B. Oilouch. (PR)



IN HONOR OF DAD

Pvt. 1st. Class Cole Merfalen enlisted as a power generation specialist in the Guam Army National Guard on May 28. His late father Gerard Merfalen also served in the Guam National Guard as an engineer. "I held the picture because it's a big moment, and I know he would be proud of me," said Merfalen. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB20-DCCA/CCDF-074

SUBMISSION DATE: JULY 01, 2020 10:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) CLASS "I" VEHICLE (A) AND ONE (1) CLASS "F" VEHICLE (B) FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS, CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT FUND"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENSION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

****MUST USE A FACE MASK BEFORE ENTERING THE OFFICE****
THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ROBERT H. HUNTER
SECRETARY, DCCA

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Eric Ignacio)
Camacho Sablan)
Petitioner,) FCD-DI
Vs.) CIVIL ACTION
Mananad Swan Sablan) NO. 19-0536
Respondent,)

SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE NAME RESPONDENT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the court, within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is P.O. Box 506273 CK Saipan, MP 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at P.O. Box 500307 Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this summons, judgment by default may be taken against you for relief in the complaint.

Dated this 14th day of April, 2020

/s/ Clerk of Court



NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

OPENING DATE: June 1, 2020 CLOSING DATE: June 16, 2020 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

NMHC JVA No.	Positions:	Salary:
2020-004	CDBG-DR Planning & Support Program Manager	UNGRADED \$50,000.00 to \$60,000.00-per annum
2020-005	CDBG-DR Project Manager	UNGRADED \$50,000.00 to \$60,000.00-per annum

Employment application form, detailed job description, qualification requirements and other information may be picked up, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan during regular working hours, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays. You may also access the application online at www.nmhcgov.net.

Applicants may submit their applications through the following options: Submission at the NMHC Central Office; Email to officemanager@nmhcgov.net; Drop-off application at the NMHC Drop Box located in front of the NMHC building.

All applicants must complete and submit the NMHC Employment Application Form together with required documents that are listed in the Employment Application Package. Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. NMHC and all its properties are drug-free zones; therefore, selected applicant will be subject to pre-employment drug screening.

It is the policy of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) that the merit system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by its personnel regulations and the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

For inquiries, please contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-6866/9447 or by email to officemanager@nmhcgov.net. NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer.

/s/
JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

CHCC issues guidance for restaurant reopening

The Bureau of Environmental Health of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. has issued a guidance for restaurants that are reopening for dine-in services, and have begun conducting inspections for certification of compliance.

According to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' latest amendments to the CNMI Emergency Directives of 2020 last May 25, 2020, the CNMI has transitioned from operating under Community Vulnerability Level RED to Community Vulnerability Level YELLOW, which allows restaurants to serve dine-in customers at 25% of originally permitted occupancy limit in accordance with supplemental regulatory guidance from the CHCC.

The BEH, which regulates food handlers and sanitation permitting, among other responsibilities, sets forth rules

for restaurants operating at level YELLOW, and has begun on-site visits to restaurants to issue certifications of compliance for dine-in services.

While bars are still ordered to remain closed in level YELLOW, restaurants and bars during all community vulnerability levels must adhere to the following:

- Enforce hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes, and use of face coverings by employees when near other employees and customers.

- Ensure adequate supplies to support healthy hand hygiene practices for both employees and customers.

- Provide physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks to ensure that customers remain at least 6 feet apart in queues or ask customers to wait in their cars or away from the establishment while wait-

ing to pick up food.

- Post signs on how to stop the spread of COVID-19, how to properly wash hands, provide notice that no one with symptoms will be permitted inside, and how to properly wear a face covering. Sample signage is available for download at <https://www.chcc.gov.mp/coronavirusinformation.php>

- Post "one-way" flow signs for entrance and "one-way" flow signs for exit to maintain crowd control.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.

- Wash, rinse, and sanitize all surfaces which come in contact with food after each use.

- Send employees with symptoms home.

- Discontinue preset tables—condiments, utensils, and tableware removed from table.

- Ensure that all staff complete online ServSafe trainings

specific to COVID-19 transmission reduction within one week of offering services.

Restaurants that offer dine-in services during level YELLOW must adhere to the following additional rules:

- Limit occupancy to 25% of their originally permitted occupancy limit.

- Require that patrons make reservations to control volume and maintain records of one point of contact for each party for contact tracing purposes.

- Limit parties dining in together to no more than four people. All parties must remain at least 6 feet apart, and are encouraged to use outdoor seating whenever possible.

- Not offer self-service food or drinks, such as buffet-style dining or beverage refill stations.

Restaurant owners can request an inspection for compliance certification online at the CHCC's COVID-19 page at chcc.gov.mp or can call the CHCC BEH at 664-4870/2/3 between 7:30am and 4:30pm from Monday through Friday.

Restaurant patrons should look for posted certification of compliance with level YELLOW requirements. Valid certificates of compliance are signed by BEH inspectors and include the restaurant's sanitation permit number for reference. If you believe a restaurant is operating out of compliance

with the rules, you may contact 664-4677 to alert regulators. The BEH may order an establishment to close if it is found to be non-compliant.

Restaurant patrons should plan to make reservations for dine-in service, limit parties to four people, and respect a 6-foot distance from other parties dining in. CHCC recommends that restaurant patrons choose outdoor seating if it's available, and see if the restaurant will accept food orders ahead of time to reduce your wait time.

A listing of restaurants open for dine-in service will be updated daily at the CHCC's COVID-19 page of its website chcc.gov.mp. (PR)

Chamorro book by UOG Press wins publishing award

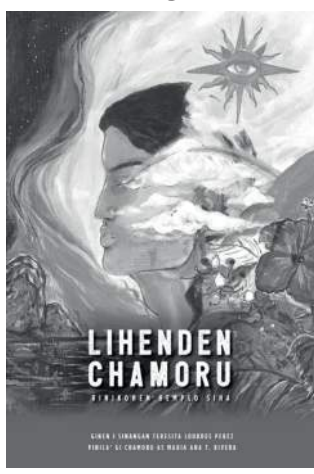
The University of Guam Press won its second Independent Publisher Book Award for *CHamoru Legends: A Gathering of Stories* written by Teresita Lourdes Perez and translated into CHamoru by Maria Ana Tenorio Rivera.

The book received a bronze medal in the category of Best Regional Fiction in the Australia/New Zealand/Pacific Rim region.

The Independent Publisher Book Awards is the longest running unaffiliated book contest for independent presses. Since 1996, it has become known as the "world's largest book awards contest" and has "identified a reading list of progressive, thought-provoking books," according to the program. Authors and publishers worldwide enter to compete for gold, silver, and bronze medals in 85 general categories, 12 regional categories, and 11 e-book categories.



The English cover of *CHamoru Legends*. UNIVERSITY OF GUAM



The CHamoru cover of *CHamoru Legends*. UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

Released in November, *CHamoru Legends: A Gathering of Stories* is a collection of re-imagined classic CHamoru legends featuring artwork from 12 local artists. It is a double-sided hardcover book featuring the legends in English on one side and the same legends in CHamoru on

the other.

"The beautiful thing about this [book] is it was designed to incorporate lots of different perspectives—the perspective of art, the perspective of multiple languages. ... It is a testament to the multiple ways that a story can be told," said Perez, who also included personal reflections in the book connecting the legends to her life and family stories. "I was not left alone in this process—I didn't want to be left alone in the process of selecting the legends and in the process of drafting the legends because legends are a community voice."

The award is the second that UOG Press has received from IPBA. Last year, the UOG Press publication *Lina'la': Portraits of Life at Litekyan* won a bronze medal for Best Regional Non-Fiction.

A second volume of *CHamoru Legends* is in production and will feature legends from the Northern Marianas Islands.

The book can be purchased at www.uog.edu/uogpress, on Amazon, or at local bookstores, including the Triton Store at the University of Guam, Bestseller, the Guam Museum gift shop, and Faith Bookstore. (PR)



UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

Author Teresita Lourdes Perez, left, and CHamoru translator Maria Ana Tenorio Rivera hold copies of their book, *CHamoru Legends: A Gathering of Stories*, at the book's launch on Nov. 14. The double-sided dual-language book was announced this month as a winner of an Independent Publisher Book Award for Best Regional Fiction.

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.



- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklist-household-ready.html>
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available. Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic:
- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
 - Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
 - Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
 - Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
 - Limiting visitors

To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Friday from 7am to 7pm and Saturday to Sunday from 7am to 4pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1542/1672/1352/1854. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday from 7:30am to 8pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561. These numbers are available from Monday to Friday from 7:30am to 4:30pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out www.chcc.gov.mp or call (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit governor.gov.mp and follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Rumor control

During crises like this, the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

CNMI Scholarship Office open for full services

The CNMI Scholarship Office is now open for full services from Monday to Thursday, from 7:30am to 4:30pm, excluding holidays and austerity Fridays.

CSO administrator Rose Pangelinan Camacho said CSO is now ready to continue to provide services for students with their higher education journeys and career goals. "We are truly thankful to our parents and students for their patience and understanding of the delay of services during the shutdown. CSO will continue to provide college access programs to our students, efficiently and safely, while we maximize the efficacy of the mitigation efforts of social distancing," said Camacho.

She said there will be some changes implemented in CSO's services to protect both CSO employees and scholarship recipients and parents.

"We ask for your continued patience as we all adapt and fully embrace new techno-

logical resources and utilize digital channels to interact on services instead of visiting our office. We are thankful that we can utilize such services to best serve you while keeping everyone safe. We have an obligation to do our very best to serve you as we continue to respond with needed changes that allow us to better serve you, while keeping all involved in the process safe during the COVID-19 pandemic," she added.

Those changes in the delivery of services include:

- Electronic applications will still be utilized. Access is available annually beginning May 1 to July 1 for fall term or Oct. 15 to Dec. 15 for winter/spring terms;

- CSO will only accept electronic copies of all supporting documents in PDF format via email (electronic transcripts must be sent directly from your institutions only via Student National Clearing House, eSCRIP-

SAVE or other hosts). For the few institutions that do not support electronic transcripts, have your institution mail hard copies via U.S. Postal Service directly to CSO at the address: CNMI Scholarship Office P.O. Box 5729 CHRB Saipan, MP 96950;

- Virtual meetings via Zoom on appointment only. Send request to the addresses below;

- CSO will only accommodate curbside (in CSO carport) drop off of supporting documents by appointment for our students in need of accommodations. Wear a mask when interacting with CSO staff; and,

- Student Loan payment receipts must be sent via email; you may continue to make payments at the CNMI Treasury or mail your check directly to CSO.

Camacho said that prior to the shutdown, CSO was operating at about 80% electronically online in the processing

of scholarship applications and conducting compliance needs.

"Once again, CSO continues to ask for your patience, understanding, and cooperation as we prepare to fully transition to 100% electronic processing of all financial assistance, compliance, repayment, and collection services beginning academic year [academic year] 2020-21," she added.

CSO will begin to utilize digital signatures via DocuSign for all documents requiring a recipient or prior recipient's signature.

"We will transition from the use of the memorandum of agreement to a contract

that you may sign electronically. This will make it easier to send documents. Also, CSO will work with the Department of Finance to allow us to disburse all scholarships or loans via direct deposit or ACH for off-island and online students. Lastly, our IT [information technology] is currently working on a feature on our student portal that will enable students to upload their supporting documents, except for the electronic transcripts. These efforts are to efficiently streamline the application and disbursement process and keep everyone safe," she added.

Contact information

- Scholarships and Grants: Blair Palacios awards@cnmischolarship.net, (670) 664-4750

- Compliance, Repayment, and Collections: Mildred Camacho compliance@cnmischolarship.net, (670) 664-4752

- Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education: Carmen Sablan wiche@cnmischolarship.net, (670) 664-4750 Board of Directors secretary: Carmen Sablan board@cnmischolarship.net, (670) 664-4750

- Vendors: Carmen Sablan carmen@cnmischolarship.net, (670) 664-4750 (PR)

Agape hosts virtual graduation

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Agape Christian School held a virtual commencement ceremony for its 12 graduating seniors and 27 middle school students last Wednesday.

ACS principal Jimeian Pang said the ACS graduation is usually a grand celebration, but the COVID-19 pandemic has reduced the occasion into a virtual ceremony with just the students and select teachers.

"Our Saipan school's graduation is very grand, [with] leis, gifts, and flowers and family members' support, but that was in the past. With COVID-19, we were unable to give out diplomas. We even asked parents not to come so we did Zoom for them," she said, referring to an online video-conferencing application.

Although it was not the graduation that ACS is known for, Pang said that the school did its best to organize a safe graduation to recognize the achievements of their students. "We still tried to keep up a good spirit. Even though it's not like before, many of our students were encouraged, especially our new students. We don't want anything to dampen the spirit of the graduation, the positive spirit and good things that come with graduation. It's sad about the

COVID-19 situation, but we won't let this get to us, we had a lot of fun," she said.

Of ACS' graduating seniors, 10 were international students and two were local residents, so many were not able to have their families participate in the ceremony. However, according to salutatorian Isaiah He Jianan, he is just glad that he was even able to have a graduation at all.

"I am just glad that I was able to participate in a graduation. It's a ceremony that you remember for a lifetime," he said.

As an ACS middle school graduate, Jianan said he felt the huge difference between a virtual graduation and a physical graduation. "When I was a middle school graduate, I also graduated from Agape so I can feel the difference between a real graduation and a virtual graduation. Although it's kind of different, it's still great. I've been here four years," he said.

As an international student, Jianan said that keeping his health and that of his family has been difficult on him but the pandemic did teach him that life is a treasure. "I was really worried about our life here in the school, because my parents who are in China told me that there is no safe place so I was scared. [The pandemic] taught us a lot, we

are a Christian school so when the pandemic hit, I was really thinking about why am I here as a student, my purpose. ... This pandemic [also] taught us to treasure our life, because we only have one life. So, treasure everything that is around us and enjoy life because it's only one," he said.

ACS valedictorian Joel Du Shouyu said the graduation ceremony was still very special, even without his family to see him march. "This was a virtual graduation and we couldn't have our parents and family with us, but it was still kind of special. It was memorable because, despite this pandemic, we were still given a graduation. Graduation was happy but it was also kind of sad since there's still the ongoing pandemic," he said.

Shouyu said that, although he was at first worried about the state of his health and his family's as a result of COVID-19, he learned that worrying changes nothing. "...I realized that the more I worried, it [wouldn't] change anything so I just prayed for them and communicated more and expressed more my care and love for them," he said.

The valedictorian for the graduating middle school class was Beth Zhang Qihong and the salutatorian was Eunice Xu Juan.

Saipan, whose major is listed as Communication BA, have joined more than 7,500 students who were named to the university's spring 2020 dean's list.

To qualify for the dean's list, students must earn a GPA of 3.5 or higher in at least 12 graded credit hours during any one term. (PR)

Micronesian leaders honor the memory of Lifoifoi

Leaders from all over Micronesia have expressed their condolences to the family of Jose Rebuenog Lifoifoi, who was a fifth speaker of the CNMI House of Representatives, former chairman of the Commonwealth Ports Authority, former chairman of the United Micronesia Development Association, and honorary consul of the Republic of Palau to the CNMI.

Lifoifoi passed away on May 18 and was laid to rest on May 30. Over the last week, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lifoifoi's widow, Cecilia, and family received messages of condolences from President Tommy E. Remengesau Jr. of the Republic of Palau, President David W. Panuelo of the Federated States of Micronesia, President David Kabua of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Speaker Tina Rose Muña Barnes of Guam.

Remengesau referred to Lifoifoi as a "lifetime friend of many Palauans."

"[Speaker Lifoifoi] cultivated many friends during his many visits over the years. He was one of the few foreigners bestowed an honorary citizenship of Palau for his many contributions to the country, including his service as Palau's honorary consul to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Joe also extended tremendous assistance and was a respected friend of the Palauan community in Saipan," Remengesau wrote in his letter. "The people of Palau join you in mourning the loss of this exceptional statesman and extend our gratitude for his many years of friendship and close ties to Palau, his second home."

Panuelo said Lifoifoi was a "well-known leader throughout our Micronesia region and a great mentor to many."

"On behalf of the People of the Federated States of Micronesia, allow me to express our



File photo shows Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, right, and former House of Representatives speaker Joe Lifoifoi. OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

heartfelt sympathies and condolences to the Lifoifoi family and the people of the CNMI," Panuelo wrote.

Kabua called Lifoifoi "one of Micronesia's great sons and leaders."

"Our islands will remember one its dedicated public servants as a pioneering leader in our economic development and infrastructure improvement as the chairman of the board for the United Micronesia Development Association, Inc. The Marshallese people and their government join the people and the government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in honoring the outstanding career and life of the late speaker...", Kabua wrote.

Muña Barnes said that Lifoifoi "lived a life that was committed to public service and the advancement of our Blue Continent," referring to the countries in the Pacific Ocean.

"Speaker Jose's legacy will always live on throughout the history of the CNMI—and the entire Blue Continent. In the brief time I had spent with him, he passionately shared

with me the history of the CNMI's relationship with the United States and inspired me to be a better leader for our people. He truly understood the importance of grassroots democracy, and truly served as a role model of government by the people and for the people," Muña Barnes wrote.

Torres thanked all the leaders and friends of Micronesia for their condolence messages to both Lifoifoi's family and to the Commonwealth.

"Speaker Joe Lifoifoi—or as I loved to call him—my chairman—made such a tremendous impact on the lives of people that call Micronesia home through his public service. I sincerely thank President Remengesau, President Panuelo, President Kabua, Speaker Muña Barnes, and everyone from all over Micronesia who sent their condolences to Auntie Cel, her children and families, and I. We are all so grateful to have had the privilege and honor to know chairman Lifoifoi. He loved the Marianas and Micronesia, and we will all miss him dearly. Godspeed chairman," said Torres. (PR)

2 students named to university's dean's list

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah—Hyo Lim Cho of Saipan, who is pursuing a Pre-Nursing bachelor's degree at the University of Utah, and Hyun Woo Jo of

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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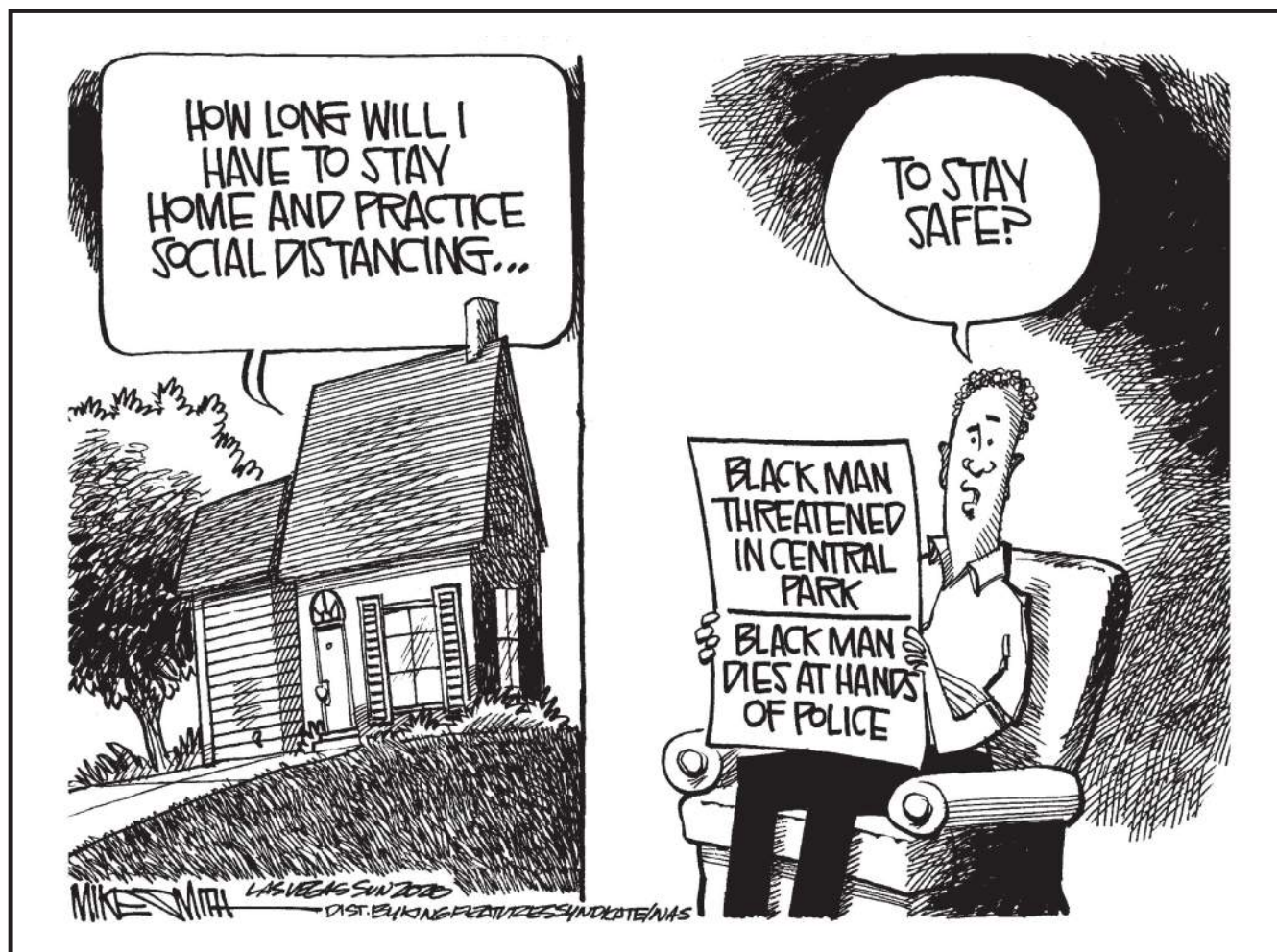
The Trump administration is right to say Hong Kong is no longer an autonomous region of China

The last time we flew out of Shanghai, China, it was 2015 and we stumbled across a sign hanging from the airport ceiling that seemed like an historical relic even then. It gave instructions—in English—for all travelers on domestic Chinese flights to head one direction and for all international travelers (which included those headed for Hong Kong and Taiwan) to head in the other direction. At the time, we smiled at the admission. The people of both places would appreciate that sign, but Beijing likes to think that both should be brought under its control.

Fast-forward a few years, and it is becoming increasingly clear that Hong Kong is slipping behind the curtain of dominance of mainland China. This week, the U.S. State Department declared that Hong Kong is no longer an autonomous region in China. The declaration by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has real implications for trade with the commercial center, and it will also have repercussions for our relationship with China.

We should make no mistake. This declaration—coming as it does amid a pandemic and after years of increasing trade tensions—will redefine our relationship with China. This declaration will harden views and strip away the remaining patina that Hong Kong was a special region that should enjoy a different approach on trade than China as a whole. It's also a declaration that will sting a little more for the fact that is based on a factual recognition that China is working to subvert a culture of individual liberty and a desire for democracy in Hong Kong. It's the sort of leadership we'd asked Washington to provide in standing up for liberty in Hong Kong, so it's one we hope Americans welcome. It's a hard truth, but one we can no longer deny: Beijing's promise of "one country, two systems" has been revealed as false.

We hasten to add that the declaration will likely be felt across the U.S. as Chinese investors rethink direct investment in the United States. Real estate seems benign, but it's already one place where Chinese investors in U.S. assets have pulled back. Such shifts will continue as the underlying relationship between our two countries continues to change. Our advice is for all of us to recognize

See **HONG KONG** on Next Page

You're white and don't care about wearing a mask? Asian Americans don't have that privilege

“You are the most selfish (expletive) people on the planet.”

I jerked my head to the left, where I saw a neighbor glaring at us from his driveway while unloading groceries from his trunk.

“Where’s your (expletive) mask?” he said. “Unbelievable.” My jaw dropped. I had just walked three blocks home with my toddler and my dad in our mostly empty Los Angeles neighborhood because my kid had thrown a tantrum in the car.

And we had forgotten our masks. Four days earlier, on May 13, Mayor Eric Garcetti had ordered face coverings any time we left home, not just when we entered essential businesses.

I pointed out my house to the neighbor to explain how close we were, just a few doors down from him. He cut me off.

“I don’t give a (expletive) where you live, and I don’t give a (expletive) what your reason is.”

Then my dad jumped in. “Sorry, sir, we forgot our masks. I’m sorry, sir.”

Still, the man didn’t soften.

“You should be sorry. And you should make her be sorry, too,” he gestured toward me. After a few more agonizing seconds, he dismissed us.

Our neighbor’s mask, by the way? It was off his face, hanging loosely around his neck. All the better to shout at us.

As a health care reporter, I had covered America’s evolution on masks as the coronavirus spread across the globe. In January, I wrote an article about why Chinese immigrants insisted on wearing surgical and construction masks in the U.S., even though it went against official health recommendations at the time. In February, I wrote about Asian families in California clashing with schools over whether their children should be allowed to wear masks in class.

At that time, Asian people wearing masks were targets for verbal and physical abuse. Attackers saw masks on Asian faces as signs of disease and invasion; people were punched and kicked, harassed on public transit, bullied at school and worse.

Now, of course, masks are the norm. And they’ve become more than just personal protection; they are symbols of courtesy and scientific buy-in. They have, to some extent, also become political signifiers. In a new poll from the Kaiser Family Foundation, 70% of Democrats said they wear a protective mask “every

By **ANNA ALMENDRALA**
Los Angeles Times

Anna Almendrala is a reporter with Kaiser Health News, an editorially independent program of the Kaiser Family Foundation, which is not affiliated with Kaiser Permanente.



time” they leave their house versus 37% of Republicans.

After our verbal beat down, my dad and I walked home stone-faced, and then retreated to our separate rooms to nurse our wounds.

I have no idea if the neighbor’s comments had a racist undertone. But it felt like the times in my childhood, first in New Zealand, then in a Bay Area suburb, when I had seen my Philippines-born parents, stunned and silent, get dressed down or humiliated by angry, callous white people. Now it was my 3-year-old daughter’s turn to see me dumbstruck. As I began telling my husband the story, I started crying so hard that I got a headache.

After my tears came reflection, and an attempt at empathy.

My neighbor was obviously scared. He was older, and potentially more medically vulnerable. His trunk had been packed with overstuffed shopping bags—probably enough food for weeks, to avoid leaving his house.

He had just come from the grocery store, an enclosed space full of things and people that could potentially infect him. I understand the stress that comes with shopping during the pandemic.

Like many of us, my neighbor could be struggling with how to live in mortal fear of the coronavirus. And for him, at least that morning, that struggle got the better of him.

Later that day, I wrote the neighbor a card introducing ourselves. I apologized for making him feel unsafe and acknowledged that he was right about the masks. But I also said he had unfairly used us as a target for his fear and frustration, and I told him I was shocked and saddened he would treat a neighbor with so much hate. I haven’t heard back from him.

My dad spent the rest of that morning praying that the man didn’t get the coronavirus—lest he blame us and all Asians, forever.

See **YOU’RE** on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

White people need to speak out against senseless killings of black people

As a child, I grew up in abject poverty with our family being evicted often. A number of times I found myself in a poor African American neighborhoods or public housing. During those times, I was often the only white child in my class.

I can say in total honesty, I was never happier as a child than when I was in those neighborhoods, housing projects or those classrooms. Ever.

During the rare times I ended up in more “affluent” white schools, I was picked on constantly because of my poverty.

But never—not once—in the poor African American neighborhoods or classrooms. I was, and felt, accepted immediately.

Over the years since, people have asked me if there were any benefits or advantages which came from such a tough existence.

For me, there were three:

As that young boy, I was blessed to learn that “black America” was truly a great America.

As that child, I got to witness the very personification of heroism in the faces and actions of single African American mothers who worked two or three jobs at a time and sacrificed their own happiness to provide for their children. Women who became my earliest and most enduring role models.

And finally, I learned from those childhood experiences that even though we—as poor black and white children—were in the fight against the life together, society still said we were different. It insisted. Whether we liked it or not.

When I got older and moved out of those pockets of happiness and acceptance for me, I learned a very ugly truth.

Once out of those poor African American neighborhoods or housing projects, as a white man, I could wave and get a taxi; I could get a loan for a car or a home; I could walk down the streets of white America and not be looked at with suspicion or fear, or worst of all, be attacked simply for the color of my skin.

I thought about all of that first, three weeks ago when I learned of the seemingly cold-blooded murder of Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia. And again, when I saw the death of George Floyd beneath the crushing knee of a white police officer in Minneapolis this week.

The fact is, I now can’t stop thinking about either man and want to scream out in rage at the senseless injustice of it all.

An injustice which tells us that “killed while being black” is horrendously real.

Don’t go looking for any other reason. Don’t try to layer multiple excuses over it. Don’t.

As for Arbery, that young man was taken from his mom and those who loved him simply and only for being a black man.

It doesn’t matter if he had prior issues with the law. It doesn’t matter if he had mental health issues. It doesn’t even matter if he might have been suspected of a crime.

The same holds true for Floyd. It does not matter if he was trying to use a counterfeit bill or not. As he lay pinned to the street as a “suspect” in a nonviolent crime, he begged the police officer to ease the pressure on his neck because he could not breathe. That plea was ignored and a few minutes later, Floyd was dead.

If that sounds tragically familiar, that’s because it is. Six years ago in New York City, Eric Garner was placed in a chokehold by a white police officer because he was suspected of selling loose

By **DOUGLAS MACKINNON**

The Baltimore Sun

Douglas MacKinnon (douglas.mackinnon@verizon.net) is a former White House and Pentagon official and author of the novel, The Dawn of a Nazi Moon: Book One.



cigarettes. A chokehold that took his life.

Thankfully, in terms of justice, there are videos which show the killings of both Arbery and Floyd. With regard to Arbery, we see him trying to jog away from the men lying in wait for him. A video which shows in graphic detail, that those white men had no intention of letting Arbery get away.

As for Floyd, we see his last breath beneath the unyielding knee of a white police officer with three other white officers standing over him. All four officers now fired.

Ahmaud Arbery and George Floyd had decades of life yet to live. Life which was brutally and wrongfully taken from them.

Now, in the year 2020, white America must acknowledge the truth behind these killings.

A truth which says to some: You can and will be “killed while being black.”

White America must scream out in protest as one against this vile reality.

Distance learning? Even my students will tell you that’s not the future

In the past few weeks, many of my high school students have sent me emails apologizing profusely for not turning in the work I assigned, for not watching the videos I made, and for not responding to the many emails I sent.

My 9-year-old son loudly and passionately bemoans yet another Zoom meeting. My teen daughters, who have morphed into nocturnal vampires as this quarantine stretches from weeks to months to goodness-knows-how-long, keep asking me “what’s the point?” They know the best grade they can get in their classes is a banal “pass.”

No one seems motivated at the moment. No one is enjoying the learning process. No one finds this new paradigm of isolated learning—Zoom meetings without end, YouTube videos and gazing at screens all day—to be a powerful catalyst for academic growth.

But the future is what really worries me.

In the coming era of cataclysmic budget cuts to education, this educational experiment under crisis conditions could be exploited to pioneer a new era of instruction, one in which the presence and power of traditional classroom teaching is permanently swapped in favor of distance or hybrid instruction requiring far fewer teachers.

The temptation for those in charge of education budgets could be strong. After all, school facilities are expensive to build and maintain. Teachers are expensive to employ. Education policy-makers may already be thinking, “Zoom meetings can host dozens and hundreds of people at the same time. Why do we need so many teachers?”

Moving away from a traditional classroom setting in which a living, breathing human being teaches and interacts with students on a daily basis would be a colossal and catastrophic mistake.

Even before the quarantine, modern students isolated themselves more—going to fewer football games and dating less, and engaging in more online socializing—than any generation in American history. Before the coronavirus lockdown, they were more likely to report mental health conditions than any other generation, according to an American Psychological Assn. survey. Their rates of depression, anxiety and the propensity for self-harm doubled between 2007 and 2018.

Physically attending school has hidden benefits. Getting up every morning, learning to obey the tyranny of the alarm clock, interacting with other students, and fostering relationships with teachers might not be akin to ascending Mount Olympus, but they are essential skills to cultivate in young people.

Moreover, we have decided as a civil society that schools should be much more than institutions of traditional learning.

Schools are now places that provide meals. They are refuges where students receive counseling and other social-emotional support.

Schools have become the ultimate backstop for many of society’s failures. When districts were forced to quickly shut down, school officials around the state did not appear to publicly fret about algebra or history classes. They worried about how to make sure the children would get fed every day.

Lawmakers and technocrats are often intoxicated by the latest technology in education, enchanted by the potential to “transform” education overnight or make schools hives of policy experimentation. But using Google Classroom does not empower a teacher to keep a struggling student after class to ask, “What’s wrong?” YouTube videos can’t make eye contact or gauge a student’s level of engagement. Zoom meetings will never capture the tactile nature of powerful teaching that exists on a personal level.

Yet we live in a world and in a time where the most important adult relationship for many school-age children is with their teacher. When I began teaching more than two decades ago, I never imagined I would have students tell me, “No one in my home cares about my success the way you do.” I never thought I would hear stories from the young men in my classes about physically protecting their mothers or younger sisters from abusive live-in boyfriends. Or that my students would ask me to attend senior awards assemblies because they had no other adult they could count on to show up.

These brutal realities make an appearance in the classroom almost every day. In their first 18 years of life, children spend only 9% of their time in school. Yet teachers are expected to socialize children, prepare them to be responsible citizens, cultivate interpersonal skills, encourage successful time management, and fortify students’ capacity to flourish in an increasingly harsh labor market.

Given these expectations, school should not become permanently more “remote.”

Let us not forget that the wonderment of the classroom, the source of its transformative possibilities, is rooted in the humanity of the people gathered in the same place, at the same time. The best teachers are not maestros of education apps or virtuosos of virtual instruction. They are savants of human transformation because of their capacity to forge powerful connections with their students, inspire their best efforts, and engage them in meaningful and personal ways.

There are no shortcuts on the path to changing a human life, no technological panaceas. Powerful teaching is about an adult believing in us, showing us a higher path. If some of us see stars it is often because a teacher tilted our heads toward the heavens.

By **JEREMY S. ADAMS**

Los Angeles Times

Jeremy Adams is a high school and college political science teacher in Bakersfield, Calif., and the author of Riding the Wave.



Ask students what they think about the last two months of instruction—from kindergarten to college—and the overwhelming response is that the magic of the classroom is lost when it is carried out over impersonal, awkward platforms. Technology should simply be a tool, an additional arrow in the pedagogical quiver of teachers. Please, for the sake of our children and their futures, do not mistake technology for the power and poignancy of an effective teacher.

HONG KONG

From Page 8

the larger picture. We are engaged in a battle of ideas on the world’s stage. And in that struggle, we should wish for Hong Kong’s democracy advocates to prevail and press back against the ideology emanating out from Beijing. In that struggle, we need smart thinking and the smart use for soft power and diplomacy to aid our natural allies and push against our adversaries. The United States’ declaration this week is one such step.

(c)2020 The Dallas Morning News

YOU’RE

From Page 8

Since that day, no one in my family has left the house without a mask on their face, and I’m anxious to train my daughter to wear one, although she resists it the way she has refused hats and headbands in the past.

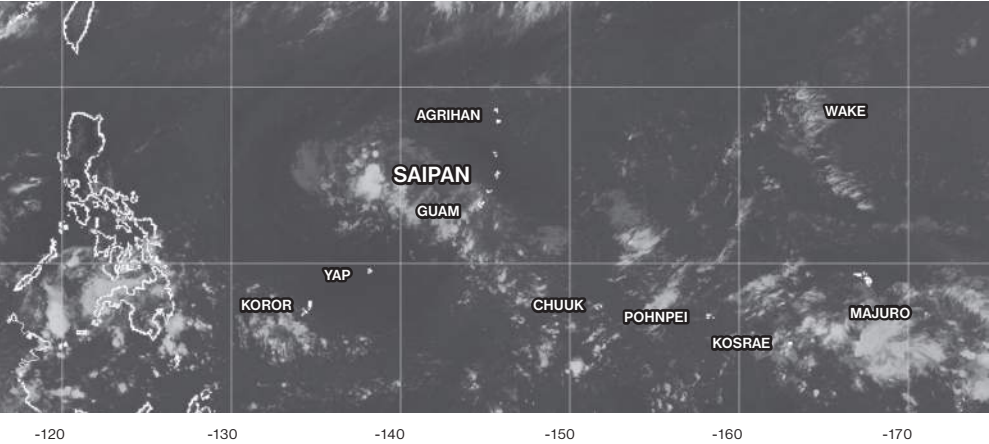
We can’t stop noticing that most other exercisers and dog-walkers in our neighborhood—all white—fly past us without them. They don’t seem to worry about getting caught on the wrong side of whatever America happens to believe about masks on any given day. But my family can’t risk it.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY					
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.					
90°	79°	89°	78°	89°	79°	89°	79°	89°	79°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:46 AM, SUNDAY, MAY 31, 2020

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Cloudy skies with scattered showers prevail over Guam and Rota this morning, while partly cloudy skies are seen over Tinian and Saipan. Moderate trade winds dominate across the region. latest buoy observations show seas between 3 and 6 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

GOVERNMENT RESOURCE LISTING

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Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
• **Cashier & Customer Service**
Monday - Friday (Closed on Holidays)
7:30 AM - 3:00 PM
Tel: (670) 664-4282

Pay bills online at www.cucgov.org, via phone by calling toll free Tel: 1-(855)-729-2282, or at any Bank of Guam, Bank of Saipan, or Bank of Hawaii Branch

CNMI State Medicaid Agency
• **Eligibility Office & Accounting / Claims**
Monday - Friday
7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
Tel: (670) 664-4880/4882

Still accepting applications and supporting documents via drop-box at Medicaid Office. Medicaid application & renewal / redetermination forms must be original. Applications/forms available for pick up next to the drop-box or online at: www.medicaid.cnmi.mp

Department of Land and Natural Resources
• **Division of Land Registration**
Monday - Thursday
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Tel: (670) 322-9987
• **Division of Agriculture**
Monday - Thursday
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Tel: (670) 256-3320 / 3321
• **Division of Fish & Wildlife**
Monday - Thursday
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Tel: (670) 664-6000

Office of the Attorney General
• **Civil & Criminal Divisions**
Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Tel: (670) 237-7500 / 7600

Office of the Public Defender
• Monday - Friday
9:00 AM - 3:30 PM
Tel: (670) 234-6503

Department of Public Works
• **Administrative Services Division**
Monday - Thursday
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Tel: (670) 235-9570 / 5818
• **Building Safety Code Division**
Monday - Thursday
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Tel: (670) 234-2726 / 2296
• **Technical Services Division**
Monday - Thursday
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Tel: (670) 234-9828 / 9838
• **Highway Branch**
Monday - Friday
7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
• **Energy Division**
Monday - Friday
7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
Tel: (670) 664-4480 / 4481
• **Roads and Grounds Division**
Monday - Friday
7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
Tel: (670) 322-9498
• **Solid Waste Management Division**
• **Lower Base Transfer Station & Marpi Landfill**
Open all week except Wednesday & Sunday
7:30 AM - 1:00 PM
Tel: (670) 322-2745 (Lower Base)
(670) 322-2761 (Marpi Landfill)

• **CNMI Public Assistance Office**
• **Available via phone or email only:**
Mondays - Fridays
7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
Tel: (670) 664-2411
Email: info@pa.gov.mp

FLIGHT SCHEDULE									
DEPARTURES					ARRIVALS				
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)					GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN				
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	1, 4, 6		UA174	7:30am	8:11am	1, 4, 6	

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°	
Palau	Thunderstorms	87° / 79°	
Yap	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°	
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°	
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	86° / 80°	
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:45 AM	6:44 PM
Tuesday	5:45 AM	6:44 PM
Wednesday	5:45 AM	6:43 PM
Thursday	5:45 AM	6:44 PM
Friday	5:45 AM	6:45 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	1:54 AM	2:13 PM
Tuesday	-	2:37 AM	3:11 PM
Wednesday	-	3:22 AM	4:10 PM
Thursday	-	4:09 AM	5:11 PM
Friday	-	4:59 AM	6:13 PM

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GOVERNMENT RESOURCE LISTING

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Department of Finance
• **Division of Revenue & Taxation**
Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Tel: (670) 664-1000
• **ALL OTHER DIVISIONS (Except Customs)**
Monday - Thursday
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

• **Division of Customs Services**
• **Airport:** OPEN DAILY
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
• **Seaport:** Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
• **Chalan Kanoa Post Office:**
Monday - Friday 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
Saturday 7:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Department of Public Lands
• **Cashier accepting payments:**
Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM
• **Available via phone or email:**
Monday - Friday, 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
Tel: (670) 234-3751/52/53/54
For appointments call (670) 234-3751 or email dpl@dpl.gov.mp

• **Saipan Zoning Office**
• **Available via phone ONLY:**
Monday - Thursday
7:30 AM - 11:30 AM
Tel: (670) 234-9661/ 9662/ 9663
Email: geri.delacruz@zoning.gov.mp

CNMI 2020 Census
• Monday - Friday
7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
Tel: (670) 682-2020
Email: cnmi@2020census.gov

Department of Public Safety
• **Bureau of Motor Vehicle (BMV)**
• **Document Drop-Off For Vehicle / Watercraft Registration Renewal**
Monday - Thursday
8:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Tel: (670) 664-9068
• **Walk-In For Drivers License**
Monday - Thursday
8:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Tel: (670) 664-9066
• **Firearms and Records**
Monday - Thursday
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM (For Walk-Ins)
Tel: (670) 664-9072
• **Highway Safety Office**
Monday - Thursday (For Walk-Ins)
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Tel: (670) 664-9121 / 9125 / 9131

Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services
• **Fire Enforcement Office**
Monday - Thursday
7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
Tel: (670) 664-9178

Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs
• Monday - Friday
7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
Tel: (670) 488-2200 / 0440 / 0550
Email: glenna.reyes@gov.mp

Business

OLEAI BEACH BAR AND GRILL

One of Saipan's *finest* beach bars

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

After waiting for two months, it is time to relax, enjoy a cold drink while watching the sun go down once again at Oleai Beach Bar & Grill located in San Jose. They officially reopened last week after closing temporarily last March due to COVID-19 concerns.

Oleai Beach Bar & Grill CEO Seiichi Kamagai said the two months they were out of business made them eager to serve customers again. "We missed everyone and our employees also missed our friendly customers who come to us whether to eat, drink, unwind, and be with family and friends...Oleai Beach Bar & Grill has been in business for 30 years and I took over in 2013...it tells you how long its special relationship is with the community," he said.

"We are back to what we



Paired with a cold drink or rice, Oleai Beach Bar & Grill's chicken sisig never fails.

BEA CABRERA

are good in doing—open seven days a week, serving a full menu, and we accept dine-

For more information, call (670) 234-0228 or go their FaceBook page: oleaibeachbar.

in and take out orders... with this, we expect to see our regular customers once again," he added.

Oleai Beach Bar and Grill is located by the Saipan lagoon and is frequented by locals and tourists during lunch time and most especially during sunset up to dinner time. "Our loyal customers love the atmosphere that we have in the restaurant...It is easy going and gives out a feel that everyone is welcome every time," Kamagai said.



BEA CABRERA

Oleai Beach Bar & Grill located along Beach Road in San Jose has been in business for 30 solid years.

Oleai Beach Bar & Grill's menu includes a wide range of dishes from American, Chamorro, Japanese, Filipino, Italian, and Mexican cuisine. "Our steak and hamburger dishes are the bestsellers because of their unique taste, delicious sides, and affordable

prices," Kamagai added.

Although the economy is not yet 100% running and back to normal, places like Oleai Beach Bar & Grill that is back in operation, compliant with social distancing and health and safety protocols make us remember what used to be pri-

or to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Oleai Beach Bar & Grill is open Monday to Sunday with business hours 11am-2pm for lunch and 5pm-9pm for happy hour and dinner. For more information, call (670) 234-0228 or go their FaceBook page: oleaibeachbar.

Trump takes aim at WHO as US economic outlook worsens

WASHINGTON (AP)—With new U.S. economic numbers highlighting the rough road ahead for a hoped-for rebound, President Donald Trump on Friday took aim at the World Health Organization and China, blaming both for their roles in the pandemic's devastation.

Trump announced that the United States will end its support for WHO, charging it didn't respond adequately to the health crisis because of China's "total control" over the global organization. Trump said Chinese officials "ignored" their reporting obligations to the WHO and pressured the agency to mislead the world when the virus was first discovered.

Earlier Friday, U.S. Commerce Department statistics showed a record-shattering 13.6% drop in spending in April, a day after a federal jobs report showed another 2 million-plus Americans went out of work last week. The depth of the spending drop is particularly damaging because consumer spending is the primary driver of the economy.

The bad economic news was echoed in Europe, where

an extensive social welfare net was showing signs of fraying, as protests erupted for a second day in Spain against layoffs by French carmaker Renault and Italy's chief central banker warned that "uncertainty is rife."

Some U.S. states were going ahead with steps to reopen businesses and leisure activities needed to spur spending and restore jobs, but there were also reminders of the risks of moving too quickly.

In Missouri, officials said they were trying to notify "mass numbers of unknown people" after someone who attended crowded pool parties Memorial Day weekend at the Lake of the Ozarks tested positive for COVID-19. Video of the parties circulated widely online, with many people criticizing revelers for flouting social distancing guidelines.

Arkansas over the past week has seen a steady rise in active coronavirus cases, following moves by Gov. Asa Hutchinson to reopen businesses shuttered during the pandemic.

Health officials on Thursday announced the number of active cases, excluding people who have recovered or died,

hit a new high of 1,830 in the state, which has had a total of 6,538 cases. Arkansas also hit a record for a one-day increase in infections in the community, meaning ones that don't include the incarcerated.

"We're not going to go back, but we want people to follow those guidelines, make sure they do everything they can to avoid the spread and we can get through this," Hutchinson said.

However, a rural Northern California county decided to temporarily rescind its order allowing reopening of restaurants, shopping and other services after its first coronavirus cases developed.

Lassen County had no reported coronavirus cases until May 22, when state data showed it was one of only two California counties with zero cases. But as of Wednesday, the county of 30,000 people had reported five known cases. Lassen County had started reopening businesses under state rules on May 11.

New York City, meanwhile, was on track to begin reopening June 8 as the state gradually loosens restrictions, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said Friday.

'Back in the game': SpaceX ship blasts off with 2 astronauts

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP)—A rocket ship built by Elon Musk's SpaceX company thundered away from Earth with two Americans on Saturday, ushering in a new era in commercial space travel and putting the United States back in the business of launching astronauts into orbit from home soil for the first time in nearly a decade.

NASA's Doug Hurley and Bob Behnken rode skyward aboard a white-and-black, bullet-shaped Dragon capsule on top of a Falcon 9 rocket, lifting off at 3:22 p.m. from the same launch pad used to send Apollo crews to the moon a half-century ago. Minutes later, they slipped safely into orbit.

"Let's light this candle," Hurley said just before ignition, borrowing the historic words used by Alan Shepard on America's first human spaceflight, in 1961.

The two men are scheduled to arrive Sunday at the International Space Station, 250 miles above Earth, for a stay of up to four months, after which they will come home with a Right Stuff-style splashdown at sea, something the world hasn't witnessed since the 1970s.

The mission unfolded amid the gloom of the coronavirus outbreak, which has killed more than 100,000 Americans, and racial unrest across the U.S. over the case of George Floyd, the handcuffed black



AP

A SpaceX Falcon 9, with NASA astronauts Doug Hurley and Bob Behnken in the Dragon crew capsule, lifts off from Pad 39-A at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Fla., Saturday, May 30, 2020.

man who died at the hands of Minneapolis police.

NASA officials and others expressed hope the flight would lift American spirits and show the world what the U.S. can do.

"We are back in the game. It's very satisfying," said Doug Marshburn, of Deltona,

Florida, who shouted, "USA! USA!" as he watched the 260-foot rocket climb skyward.

SpaceX becomes the first private company to launch people into orbit, a feat achieved previously by only three governments: the U.S., Russia and China.

BOG reminds community to be vigilant about suspicious, unsolicited emails

HAGATNA, Guam—Bank of Guam is reminding customers to be alert to suspicious, unsolicited emails asking customers for information or to click on a hyperlink to validate information.

The bank reminds all:

- Do not respond to the request;
- Do not click on any links

in the email;

- Do not open any attachments;
- Do not provide any personal information and
- Delete the message and empty your "trash" folder.

For more information, call Jackie Marati at (671) 472-5258. (PR)

Nation

US cities fear protests may fuel new wave of virus outbreaks

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The massive protests sweeping across U.S. cities following the police killing of a black man in Minnesota have sent shudders through the health community and elevated fears that the huge crowds will lead to a new surge in cases of the coronavirus.

Some leaders appealing for calm in places where crowds smashed storefronts and destroyed police cars in recent nights have been handing out masks and warning demonstrators they were putting themselves at risk.

“If you were out protesting last night, you probably need to go get a COVID test this week,” Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms said Saturday evening. “There is still a pandemic in America that’s killing black and brown people at higher numbers.”

Minnesota’s governor said too many protesters weren’t socially distancing or wearing masks after heeding the call earlier in the week.

But many seemed undeterred. “It’s not OK that in the middle of a pandemic we have to be out here risking our lives,” Spence Ingram said Friday after marching with other protesters to the state Capitol in Atlanta. “But I have to protest for my life and fight for my life all the time.”

Ingram, 25, who was wearing a mask, said she has asthma and was worried about contracting the virus. But she said as a black woman, she always felt that her life was under threat from police and she



AP
In this photo taken with a wide angle lens, demonstrators sit in an intersection during a protest over the death of George Floyd, Saturday, May 30, 2020, in Los Angeles.

outside the Barclays Center. Officers cleared the crowd by spraying an eye-irritating chemical.

Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz said after another night of unrest in Minneapolis that many protesters wearing masks were simply trying to hide their identities and “cause confusion and take advantage of this situation.”

“I will continue to stress, because it seems like a lifetime ago: We are still in the middle of a pandemic and passed 1,000 deaths yesterday. We still have hospitals on the verge of being overrun with COVID-19,” he said.

Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey echoed those concerns: “We have two crises that are sandwiched on top of one other.”

needed to protest that.

The demonstrations over the killing of George Floyd, a black man who died after a white Minneapolis officer pressed a knee into his neck, are coming at a time when many cities were beginning to relax stay-at-home orders.

That’s especially worrisome for health experts who fear that silent carriers of the virus who have no symptoms could unwittingly infect others at gatherings with people packed cheek to jowl and cheering and

jeering without masks.

“Whether they’re fired up or not that doesn’t prevent them from getting the virus,” said Bradley Pollock, chairman of the Department of Public Health Sciences at the University of California, Davis.

Even for the many protesters who have been wearing masks, those don’t guarantee protection from the coronavirus. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends cloth masks because they can make it more difficult for in-

fectured people to spread the virus—but they are not designed to protect the person wearing the mask from getting it.

The U.S. has been worst hit by the coronavirus outbreak, with more than 1.7 million cases and over 103,000 deaths, according to a tally kept by Johns Hopkins University.

In New York, where more than 21,000 people have died during the pandemic, a large crowd in Brooklyn tossed water bottles at officers and torched a police van Friday

Protests over police killings rage in dozens of US cities

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Tense protests over the death of George Floyd and other police killings of black people grew Saturday from New York to Tulsa to Los Angeles, with police cars set ablaze and reports of injuries mounting on all sides as the country convulsed through another night of unrest after months of coronavirus lockdowns.

The protests, which began in Minneapolis following Floyd’s death Monday after a police officer pressed a knee on his neck until he stopped breathing, have left parts of the city a grid of broken windows, burned-out buildings and ransacked stores. The unrest has since become a national phenomenon as protesters decry years of deaths at police hands.

Tens of thousands of people were in the streets across the country, many of them not wearing masks or observing so-

cial distancing, raising concerns among health experts about the potential for spreading the coronavirus pandemic at a time when much of the country is in the process of reopening society and the economy.

After a tumultuous Friday night, racially diverse crowds took to the streets again for mostly peaceful demonstrations in dozens of cities from coast to coast. The previous day’s protests also started calmly, but many descended into violence later in the day.

■ In Washington, the National Guard was deployed outside the White House, where chanting crowds were taunting Secret Service agents. Dressed in camouflage and holding shields, the troops stood in a tight line a few yards from the crowd, preventing them from pushing forward. President Donald Trump, who spent much of Saturday in Florida for the SpaceX rocket

launch, landed on the lawn in the presidential helicopter at dusk and went inside without speaking to journalists.

■ In Philadelphia, at least 13 officers were injured when peaceful protests turned violent and at least four police vehicles were set on fire. Other fires were set throughout downtown.

■ In the Greenwood District of Tulsa, Oklahoma, the site of a 1921 massacre of black people that left as many as 300 dead and the city’s thriving black district in ruins, protesters blocked intersections and chanted the name of Terence Crutcher, a black man killed by a police officer in 2016.

■ In Seattle, police fired tear gas and stun grenades to try to disperse black-clad crowds that smashed downtown shopfronts, stole merchandise and tossed mannequins onto the street.

■ In Los Angeles, protest-

ers chanted “Black Lives Matter,” some within inches of the face shields of officers. Police used batons to move the crowd back and fired rubber bullets. One man used a skateboard to try to break a police SUV’s windshield. A spray-painted police car burned in the street.

■ And in New York City, dangerous confrontations flared repeatedly as officers made arrests and cleared streets. A video showed two NYPD cruisers lurching into a crowd of demonstrators who were pushing a barricade against one of them and pelted it with objects, knocking several people to the ground. It was unclear if anyone was hurt.

“Our country has a sickness. We have to be out here,” said Brianna Petrisko, among those at lower Manhattan’s Foley Square, where most were wearing masks amid the coronavirus pandemic. “This is the only way we’re going to be heard.”

Before Floyd’s death, activists saw progress on police reforms

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Years of dialogue about police and criminal justice reforms in Minneapolis had improved the relationship between the African American community and law enforcement, activists say—before the police killing this week of George Floyd, a handcuffed black man who died after a white officer pressed his knee into Floyd’s neck for several minutes as he pleaded for air.

Floyd’s death and footage of his neck pinned under the officer’s knee have unleashed protests and violent clashes with law enforcement—exposing simmering frustration and the fact that there’s much work still ahead, several advocates and leaders told The Associated Press.

“Progress and change can ebb and flow,” said Jeremiah Ellison, who won a City Council seat after participating in past protests against police killings of African Americans in Minnesota.

The four nights of unrest this week—including the torching of a police station that officers abandoned—“proved to me that we’ve regressed to the point of 2015,” Ellison said, referring to the year that also saw protests after the death of Jamar Clark, a black man killed by police.

Minneapolis—a city of

nearly 430,000 that is 60% white, 19% black and 9% Hispanic—has a long history of economic and educational disparities that have marginalized black residents for decades, despite its reputation for progressive values. It is one of the most segregated cities in the country for its size, and schools suffer from stubborn achievement gaps.

The city appointed its first black chief of police nearly three years ago, after slow progress toward making the department more inclusive. Earlier this year, a statewide task force made up of activists, people representing victims of police brutality, and law enforcement leaders released recommendations for policing reforms.

That task force was formed in the wake of several high-profile fatal shootings of black men by police in the Minneapolis area. Those included Clark, who was killed during a struggle with two white Minneapolis officers, and Philando Castile, who was fatally shot by a Hispanic suburban police officer during a traffic stop in 2016.

While Nekima Levy Armstrong, a civil rights lawyer and former president of the Minneapolis NAACP, acknowledges that progress, she said that many old habits are still entrenched.

World

China says US action on Hong Kong 'doomed to fail'

BEIJING (AP)—The mouthpiece newspaper of China's ruling Communist Party said that the U.S. decision to end some trading privileges for Hong Kong "grossly interferes" in China's internal affairs and is "doomed to fail."

The Hong Kong government called President Donald Trump's announcement unjustified and said it is "not unduly worried by such threats," playing down concern that they could drive companies away from the Asian financial and trading center.

An editorial Saturday in China's official People's Daily newspaper said that attempts at "forcing China to make concessions on core interests including sovereignty and security through blackmailing or coercion ... can only be wishful thinking and day-dreaming!"

Trump's move came after China's ceremonial parliament voted Thursday to bypass Hong Kong's legislature and develop and enact national security legislation on its own for the semi-autonomous territory. Democracy activists and many

legal experts worry that the laws could curtail free speech and opposition political activities.

The Chinese government issued no official response Saturday, but has said previously it would retaliate if the U.S. went ahead with its threat to revoke trading advantages granted to Hong Kong after its handover from British to Chinese rule in 1997.

"This hegemonic act of attempting to interfere in Hong Kong affairs and grossly interfere in China's internal affairs will not frighten the Chinese



Pro-China supporters hold the effigy of U.S. President Donald Trump and Chinese national flag outside the U.S. Consulate during a protest in Hong Kong, Saturday, May 30, 2020. AP

Israeli forces kill unarmed autistic Palestinian man

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israeli police shot dead an unarmed autistic Palestinian man in Jerusalem's Old City on Saturday after saying they suspected he was carrying a weapon.

The shooting drew broad condemnations and revived complaints alleging excessive force by Israeli security forces. On social media, some compared the shooting to police violence in the U.S.

Relatives identified the deceased man as Iyad Halak, 32. They said he suffered from autism and was heading to the school for students with special needs where he studied each day when he was shot.

"They killed him in cold blood," Halak's mother, Rana, told Israel's Channel 12 TV.

In a statement, Israeli police said they spotted a suspect "with a suspicious object

that looked like a pistol." When he failed to obey orders to stop, officers opened fire, the statement said. Police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld later said no weapon was found.

Channel 12 said members of Israel's paramilitary border police force fired at Halak's legs and chased him into a dead-end alley. It said a senior officer ordered a halt in fire as they entered the alley, but that a second officer did not listen and fired six or seven bullets from an M-16 rifle, killing Halak. The report said both officers were taken into custody and interrogated for several hours.

AP video from the scene showed three bullet holes in a white wall at the end of the alleyway.

Halak's father, Kheiri, said police raided the family's home after the shooting. "They found nothing," he

said, claiming that police had cursed his daughter when she became upset at them.

Lone Palestinian attackers with no clear links to armed groups have carried out a series of stabbings, shootings and car-ramming attacks in recent years.

Palestinians and Israeli human rights groups have long accused Israeli security forces of using excessive force in some cases, either by killing individuals who could have been arrested or using lethal force when their lives were not in danger.

"We must resist the expected cover-up and make sure that the police will sit in jail," Ayman Odeh, the leader of the main Arab party in parliament, wrote on Twitter. "Justice will be done only when the Halak family, their friends and the rest of the Palestinian people know freedom and independence."

UN adopts new voting procedure during COVID-19 pandemic

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—The U.N. General Assembly adopted a new voting procedure Friday for the upcoming election of new members of the Security Council aimed at preventing a large gathering and ensuring social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Instead of meeting in the horseshoe-shaped assembly chamber at U.N. headquarters overlooking New York's East River, ambassadors from the 193 U.N. member nations will cast secret ballots at a designated venue during spaced-out time slots.

And they will be voting not only for five non-permanent members of the Security Council to serve two-year terms but for 18 new members of the 54-nation Economic and Social Council to serve three-year terms.

According to the new pro-

cedure, the president of the General Assembly will send a letter to all member states at least 10 working days before the first round of secret balloting for the two elections to inform them of the date, venue where ballots should be cast, and other relevant information.

The Security Council election had been scheduled for June 17, but it's unclear whether that will remain the date.

The U.N. headquarters complex remains open for essential workers but Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has ordered U.N. staff to work from home until June 30.

The Security Council has five permanent members—the United States, Russia, China, Britain and France—and 10 members elected by the General Assembly for two-year terms. Five countries are elected every year.

The council is the U.N.'s most powerful body and winning a seat is a pinnacle of achievement for many countries because it gives them a strong voice on issues of international peace and security ranging from conflicts in Syria, Yemen and Ukraine to the nuclear threat posed by North Korea and Iran, and attacks by extremist groups such as the Islamic State and al-Qaida.

This year seven countries are vying for five seats, and there are two hotly contested races.

In the group of Western nation, Canada, Ireland and Norway are battling for two seats, and in Africa, Kenya and Djibouti are competing for one seat. India is running unopposed for the Asia-Pacific seat and Mexico is running unopposed for the seat for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Message of Appreciation

†Faustino Mettao Olopai

We the family of the late Faustino Mettao Olopai, also know as "Tino" or "Tinong" wish to extend our most sincere and heartfelt appreciation to all our family, relatives and friends (near and far).

Your thoughtfulness, unselfish support and guidance has helped us through this time of sorrow and loss.

Ghilisow, Si Yu'us Ma'ase and Thank you

The Family

Jean; Ron; Michele,
Dan, Omari, DJ
and Theo

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BOATING AND PADDLING

For now, Central Florida's waterways are open to boating, paddling and fishing. It's easy to keep distance between other boaters on the water, but harder to maintain at least six feet of distance when sharing a pontoon or fishing boat with others. Plan accordingly.

But when setting out in individual kayaks or on paddleboards, lakes and rivers can provide plenty of distance between you and anyone else enjoying outdoor recreation.

Easily-accessible Central Florida paddles include Rock Springs' "Emerald Cut," the Winter Park Chain of Lakes, Silver Springs State Park, Juniper Springs and the Econ River.

Outdoor recreation can still provide a respite from coronavirus fears

By PATRICK CONNOLLY
ORLANDO SENTINEL

The sun is shining in Central Florida, but many have been hunkering down to work from home and care for their families inside their homes. Despite the spread of coronavirus, it's still possible to find peace outdoors.

Florida's state parks remain open with reduced hours until further notice (camping, rentals, activities and events have been canceled). Urban green spaces in Orlando from Lake Eola to Lake Baldwin Park still welcome visitors. Seminole County encouraged locals to practice social distancing "close to home" by utilizing the county's public lands.

Health officials have asked the public to stay home as much as possible and go out only when necessary.

And if you're sick, the best practice is to stay home and, if showing symptoms of COVID-19, get tested and self-quarantine for at least 14 days.

But if you're healthy and in need of fresh air, nature should provide a welcome respite from an unprecedented time of stress and isolation.

Still, you should take precautions when opting for the outdoors: Wash your hands frequently, disinfect community-used surfaces and avoid touching your face. Also, stay at least six feet apart from others while embarking on any outdoor adventure.



Gelcys Castaneda, and her 7-year-old son, Andres run on the Little Econ Greenway.

RICARDO RAMIREZ BUXEDA/ORLANDO SENTINEL/TNS

RUNNING

While running races from the Tokyo Marathon to the Boston Marathon have been canceled or postponed, running alone or with one or two partners is possible when exercising the right precautions.

Try to keep distance between running buddies and other people on the trails or streets. Avoid public restrooms, but if you can't, wash hands after coming into high-contact surfaces. Also exercise caution when using crosswalk buttons, perhaps using an elbow instead of a hand.

Central Florida trails well-suited for running include the Little Econ Greenway, Orlando Urban Trail, the 2.5-mile loop around Lake Baldwin and the Cady Way Trail.

HIKING

Nothing quite compares to the solitude one can experience while hiking through parts of Florida's lush wilderness. While the heat is ramping up and the state's mild winter fades into the distant past, hiking is still possible in Central Florida.

If hiking in a small group, try to keep distance between hikers. If heading out alone, be sure to plan your route, take enough food and water and let someone know where you're heading. Be cautious and practice good hygiene

when using public restrooms, packing hand sanitizer if it's available.

In Seminole County, find a 7.1-mile loop trail that follows the St. Johns River in the Black Bear Wilderness Area, or visit the 240-acre Econ Wilderness Area. Explore the Turkey Lake Nature Trail at Bill Frederick Park. Take a stroll through Mead Botanical Gardens. Hike through any of the state parks while they remain open or go to the Orlando Wetlands Park.

CYCLING

While it's not advisable for cyclists to continue embarking on large group rides, heading out on the trails on two wheels is possible when keeping distance between a few riding partners or going out alone.

As with other activities, be careful when visiting public restrooms or encountering high-touch surfaces while riding.

Central Florida has miles and miles of paved trails to explore, including on the Seminole Wekiva Trail, Cady Way Trail, Little Econ Greenway, West Orange Trail and Cross Seminole Trail. Or visit Lake Druid Park and Markham Woods for some mountain biking action.

Alternatively, explore options for virtual group rides on indoor trainers using services such as Zwift.



PARKS AND REC

While Central Florida's urban green spaces can sometimes draw crowds, it's possible to visit while practicing social distancing.

Avoid or practice extra hygiene when encountering high-touch areas such as playgrounds and benches, plus try to keep several feet of distance between you and other park visitors.

Lake Eola Park might still be a little too crowded, but Lake Baldwin Park, Barnett Park, Mead Botanical Gardens and Kraft Azalea Park provide good opportunities for spreading out. In addition, Leu Gardens remains open for now.



GOLFING

Many of Central Florida's golf courses are currently open to those who want to tee off. The links are a place where isolation is possible.

If golfing with somebody else, consider using separate golf carts. Be sure to disinfect the cart before using it and wash hands when finished.

Orlando-area public courses include Dubsdread, Shingle Creek, Winter Park, Hawk's Landing, MetroWest and North Shore golf clubs.

Life & Style

Top spellers prepare to crown national champion, from home

By BEN NUCKOLS
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Like dozens of other veteran spellers in their final year of eligibility, Anson Cook had big plans for this year’s Scripps National Spelling Bee, which was canceled because of the coronavirus pandemic. The 13-year-old eighth-grader from Potomac, Maryland, was a two-time participant in the bee, and last year he finished in a tie for 41st. His objective was to make it into the top 12 or so who participate in the prime-time, ESPN-televvised finals. “My goal for 2020 was to make it to the finals of Scripps.

After the cancellation I was like, ‘What do I do now?’ And now I’ve achieved that goal,” Anson said. He reached his goal by becoming one of the 16 finalists in the SpellPundit National Online Spelling Bee, a new event created by two teenage ex-spellers to fill the void left by the cancellation and give eighth-graders one last chance to compete. The National Spelling Bee has always been limited to kids in middle and elementary school, and Scripps has said it will not extend eligibility to allow ninth-graders to participate next year. The SpellPundit bee, with spellers competing from their

homes over Zoom, concludes Thursday night, the same time the Scripps winner would have been decided. The champion receives \$2,500, a pittance compared to the National Spelling Bee’s first prize of \$50,000, but worth a middle-schooler’s time and effort all the same. Most of the spellers who would have been favorites at the national bee quickly signed up, including the top three still-eligible finishers from last year. The bee pronouncers and judges are all recent ex-spellers, including Naysa Modi, the 2018 Scripps runner-up, and Sohum Sukhantankar, one of last year’s eight champions.

Yes, eight: Last year’s Scripps bee ended in an eight-way tie when organizers ran out of words difficult enough to challenge the best spellers. SpellPundit co-founder Shourav Dasari pledged that would not happen with his bee, and so far the words have been plenty tough. In a semifinal round on Wednesday night, six out of seven competitors spelled their words incorrectly, forcing a tiebreaker among the six who missed to fill three spots in the finals. Scott Remer, a private spelling coach and author of the book “Words of Wisdom: Keys to Success in the Scripps National Spelling Bee,” said

he was impressed with the SpellPundit word list because it has been consistently tough enough to knock out some, but not all, spellers in a round. “Every year as I tutor kids I’m constantly finding new words, not just new words but new words that are difficult, have interesting definitions, are an appropriate length—words that are perfect spelling bee words,” said Remer said. “I don’t think the problem is that those sorts of spelling bee words don’t exist.” The semifinal rounds of the SpellPundit bee ran relatively smoothly on Tuesday and Wednesday, aside from the occasional audio glitch. And the

organizers were accountable for their shortcomings—when they failed to give one of two languages of origin to Atman Balakrishnan, he appealed, and was granted a new word. He misspelled that word, too. Because there is no way to guarantee spellers aren’t cheating, the bee is operating on an honor system. Spellers are instructed to be alone in a room with only a laptop or desktop computer, and to keep their hands in view of the camera while spelling. That requirement led to some odd body language, with many spellers adopting a pose of surrender with hands up and palms forward.

By JUWON PARK
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—Dissident Chinese artist Ai Weiwei believes the newly passed national security law for Hong Kong augurs the end for the semi-autonomous city. Ai was arrested at Beijing’s airport in April 2011 and held for 81 days without explanation during a wider crackdown on dissent that coincided with the international ferment of the Arab Spring. In an interview with The Associated Press, Ai said he identifies with Hong Kong’s democracy movement and has been working on a documentary about protests that began a year ago, at times erupting into tear gas-shrouded combat between police and demonstrators.

Ai Weiwei says new security law is the end of Hong Kong

“I experienced every detail of who they (the protesters) are, how they fight and how this is going to end,” Ai said. “They are so determined and very pure. So those stories are really, really hurting me.” Many in Hong Kong fear their city will become like any other in mainland China after the National People’s Congress in Beijing approved the national security law. It targets people and groups suspected of sedition or other threats to safety and security and follows recent arrests of many leading pro-democracy activists in the former British colony. According to Ai, the new measure is “not lawful” because even the Chinese state hasn’t established “its own le-

gitimacy of control.” China’s communist leaders promised to allow Hong Kong to keep its own customs territory and financial system, laws and civil liberties for 50 years after Beijing took control in 1997. Critics of the new law say it may allow mainland security organs to interfere in local law enforcement, among other things. “So, China promised ‘one country, two systems’ for 50 years, now it’s far from that,” Ai said from his home in Cambridge, England. “They violated their own words. So, that’s more dangerous because once you’ve lost the trust of the international



Weiwei

community, who’s going to (have a) dealing or have a business with someone like this?” “In old China, we have a word that means if you say something, it has to be trusted,” he said. Hong Kong’s status as a safe haven for dissent has been deteriorating for years, Ai said, pointing to abductions of business figures embroiled in mainland Chinese business disputes, among others. In one of the best known cases, five Hong Kong booksellers went missing in 2015 and were later found to have been detained in China for selling books critical of

the government. “Many people still disappeared and nobody knows where they are,” he said. “So Hong Kong cannot allow this to happen.” Ai also mentioned the disappearance 25 years ago of a boy chosen by the Dalai Lama, the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader, to be Tibetan Buddhism’s second-highest figure. “Nobody knows where this lama is and where his family is. And all of those human rights lawyers disappeared,” Ai said. “I was disappeared,” he said, referring to his more than two months of detention in 2011. When Ai was released, it was announced that he had confessed to tax evasion and fined \$2.4 million bill. He has

since left China on his Chinese passport and legally has the right to return. His last visit to the Chinese mainland was a few months after he first left in July 2015, his studio said. Before protesters turned the glitzy financial center into a canvas of anti-government graffiti, Hong Kong was famous for its bustling art scene—home to the annual Art Basel and many independent galleries. When asked about Hong Kong’s future, Ai said the definition of art has been changing amid the unrest. Protest itself is a form of art, he said. “When you see what happened in Hong Kong with the protesters, the way they organize through the internet, every day they would create hundreds of different posters so fast,” he said.

Pregnant bride-to-be faces choice between two brothers

DEAR ABBY: When I was younger, I was engaged to a man I'll call "Jake." I was deeply in love with him, only to have my heart broken when he cheated on me, so I broke it off. A short time later, I developed feelings for his brother, "Jed." One thing led to another, and Jed and I are engaged to be married in two months. When Jake found out I was dating Jed, he grew distant. I figured it was because he was in shock. Recently, he contacted me and invited me to dinner. Thinking it had to do with the wedding plans, I accepted. When we were getting ready to leave, Jake told me he still loved me and had made a terrible mistake. I had had a few drinks, and we ended up having a one-night stand. I just found out I am pregnant, and I'm not sure if Jake is the father or Jed is. Honestly, I still love Jake, but he can't keep a job, and I don't think he could support me and a baby. What should I do? Should I keep my mouth shut and marry Jed, who has a good job and is faithful?

BIG MESS IN THE SOUTH

DEAR BIG MESS: You would be doing a terrible disservice to Jed if you marry him while you "honestly" still love his brother. If you do, you will be in for a lifetime of guilt and frustration, and the chances are great that you and Jake won't be able to stay away from each other. While marriage under these circumstances may seem like an attractive solution for you economically, it doesn't take a crystal ball to predict it will be another disaster.

Instead of trying to take the easy way out, straighten your spine, fess up and do the right thing. A paternity test will determine which brother is the father of your child and the one who should support it. DEAR ABBY: I'm a 16-year-old girl and 6 feet tall. I have already been through the worst of my insecurities, and even though I now have some confidence, my height still bothers me. I've always been taller than my peers and blamed my social problems on my height. Someone mentions it every day, and where I work, every other customer comments on it, too. I try not to be upset over something I can't change. I know people don't mean to be hurtful, but it makes me feel like I stand out too much. I also feel like I'm too big and too awkward for normal activities. My pants are never long enough, and my skirts are always too short. I have to adjust car seats and gym equipment to fit. Worst of all, it's off-putting to boys. Most of them are shorter and cite it as the reason they aren't interested in me romantically. I know this might seem trivial, but it's my biggest insecurity and hard to overcome. Please help. TALL PROBLEM IN NEW MEXICO DEAR PROBLEM: Many people consider height to be an advantage. You might, too, once you decide to own and take pride in it. Regarding your difficulty in finding clothes that fit, do some research online and you will discover stores that cater

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



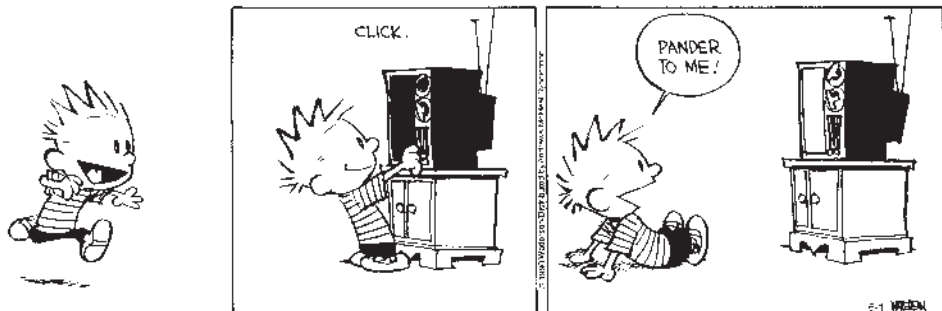
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

to tall women and men. I can't wave a magic wand and fix the insecurities of the young men in your community and neither can you. This is why I'm advising you to broaden your horizons and look further for romance because it isn't beyond your reach. A way to do that might be to develop an interest in basketball, a sport that attracts tall people. When you're older, check into a group called Tall Clubs International. If you are 21 and over 5 feet, 10 inches, you qualify to join and meet other people who won't be put off at all by your height. You will find them by going to tall.org. * Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

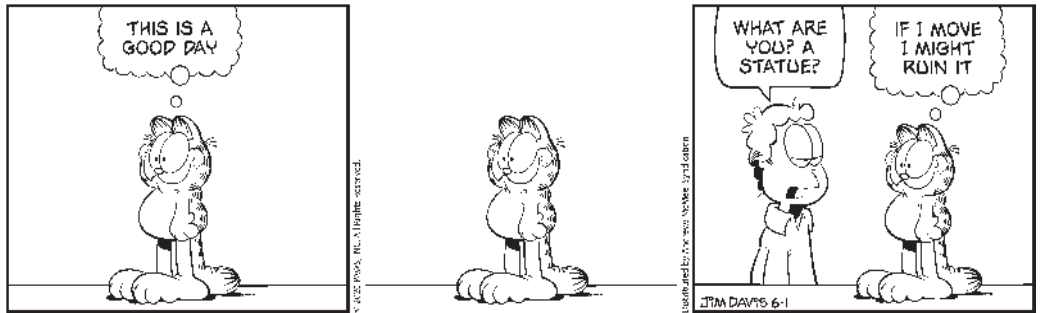
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



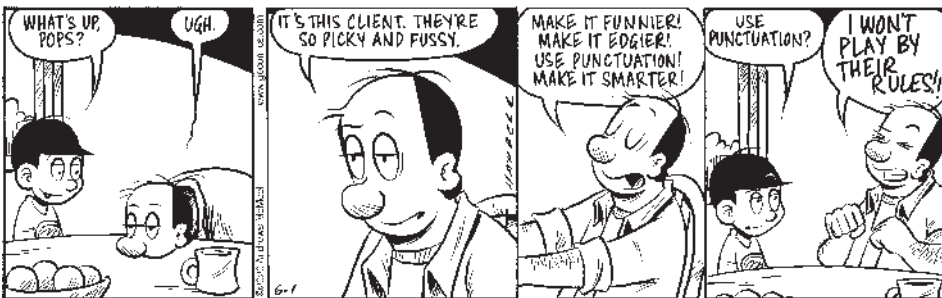
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Venomous viper
4 Muffler
9 "Now I get it!"
12 Tease
13 Carrier
14 "— voyage!"
15 Italian car
17 Automaton, for short
18 Chum
19 Cleans with a broom
21 Hank of "The Birdcage"
24 Jealousy
25 Pants part
26 SSE's opposite
28 Beetle Bailey's boss
31 Get ready, briefly
33 Highland hat
35 Linguist Chomsky
36 More achy
38 Fan's cry
40 Branch
41 Country singer Jackson

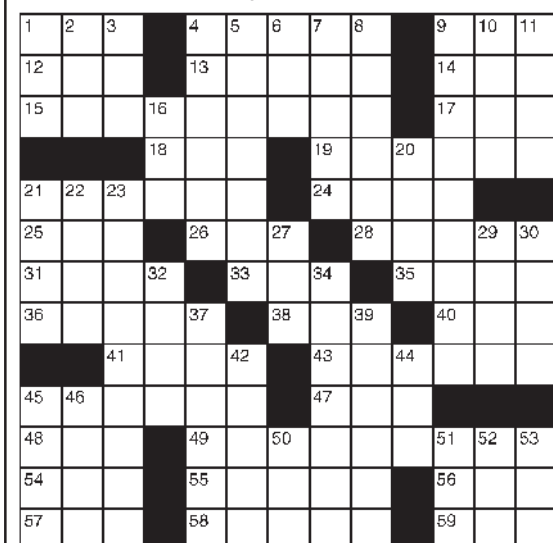
DOWN

1 Rap sheet abbr.
2 Part of RSVP
3 Printable file format
4 Use a sieve
5 Engine fluid
6 \$ dispenser
7 Witherspoon of "Wild"
8 Angry looks
9 1969 Beatles album
10 Basketball target
11 Picnic invaders
16 Earth Day mo.
20 Author Hunter
21 Swiss peaks
22 Goose egg
23 Specs on toy packages
27 Armed conflict
29 "Tootsie" actress
30 Madame Bovary
32 Soccer legend
34 Augusta golf tourney
37 Holiday Inn rival
39 "Family Feud" host
42 Consumerist
44 "Science Guy" Bill
45 Hallmark offering
46 Grooving on
50 Pensioned (Abbr.)
51 Apprehend
52 Olympics chant
53 Hearing thing

Solution time: 26 mins.

P	O	T	F	I	R	P	A	I	E	D
A	X	E	A	M	O	E	R	I	C	A
T	I	N	S	P	O	N	G	E	R	O
O	D	D	T	U	T	U	S			
N	E	S	S	G	Y	M	E	V	E	R
		W	I	N	B	O	B	C	A	T
M	E	S	A	S		T	O	R	T	E
S	K	I	B	O	E	V	O	N		
N	E	T	S		E	P	A		Y	E
				H	A	U	L	I	Q	U
G	C	B	M	A	R	L	E	C	Y	U
O	R	T	I	Z		S	T	P	I	T
C	A	U	G	E		E	S	E		P

Last Friday's Answer 06/01



STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Wil-low Shields, 20; Amy Schumer, 39; Heidi Klum, 47; Morgan Freeman, 83.

Happy Birthday: Learn as much as you can this year. Documentaries and online seminars will help reshape you for what's to come. Consider what makes you happy or the type of challenge that will spark your imagination and motivate you to find a path that encourages you to follow your heart and dreams. Commit to turning your intention into reality. Your numbers are 8, 11, 20, 26, 32, 35, 44.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Listen, observe and tune in to what experts say. Fill your mind with information that will help you make the right decision regarding your direction and income. Working alongside someone you love will help you both get what you want. ★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Think matters through before you decide to make a move. If you act prematurely, you will miss out on something better. Have patience; time is on your side. Discipline and hard work will pay off. A challenging job will ease stress. ★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): A little will go a long way. Minimize your needs, and declutter your surroundings. Once you clear enough space, it will make room to start projects that will lead to a brighter future. Personal growth and physical improvement are favored. ★★★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Work hard, and prepare for whatever comes your way. Get fit and stay healthy. A steady routine will help you reach your goal. A

couple of innovative alterations to your schedule will improve your lifestyle. Idle time will lead to emotional pitfalls. ★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Pitch in and help. Offer physical action if it will make a difference in your community. Looking out for those who are vulnerable will help you gain respect and support when you decide to make a change. Self-improvement is favored. ★★★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Stay on top of whatever job or responsibility belongs to you. Focus on being productive and using whatever skills you have to get things done with efficiency and in a timely fashion. Walk away from unsavory situations. ★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Explore possibilities. Consider what you enjoy doing most and the skills you have to help you reach your goal. Watch a tutorial or sign up for a course that will prepare you for a position you want to pursue. ★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Put a little thought and muscle into improving your surroundings. Use your imagination, and declutter your space to make room for the jobs or pastimes you want to explore. Avoid joint ventures or sharing expenses with others. Go forward alone. ★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Proceed with caution. Distance yourself from troublemakers or meddlers. Use common sense, and take action if the information you receive is factual. Refuse to let an outsider come between you and someone you love. ★★

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Review details, conversations and information that could influence a decision you want to make. Implement a change at home based on practical needs. Share your intentions, and find out where you stand. ★★



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Tend to money, contracts and personal documents with a goal in mind. An incentive that makes you want to save and keep everything in order will leave you open to take advantage of an opportunity that's heading your way. ★★★★★



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Do something you love. Refuse to let what others do lead you astray or cause you to miss something you enjoy. An idea you have will trigger a change that will improve the way you live and the pastimes you pursue. ★★

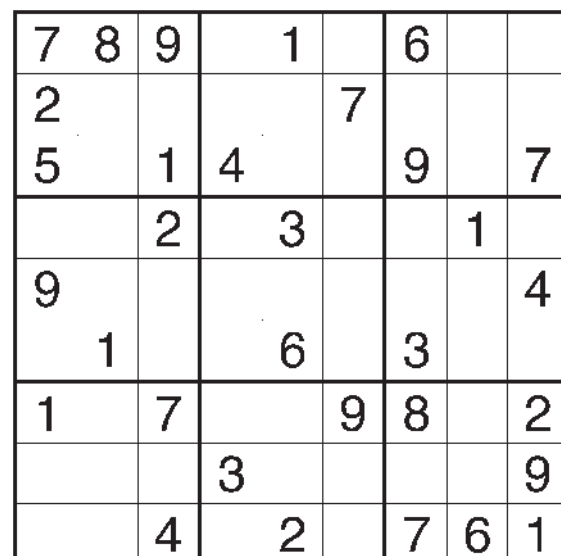
Birthday Baby: You are sensitive, charming and imaginative. You are persuasive and proactive.

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SUDOKU

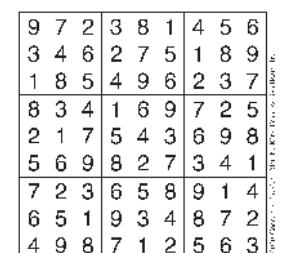
Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green



Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer



Difficulty Level ★

6/01

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

KEEPING BUSY AT HOME

Solution: 7 letters

E C T C S C R A B B L E N D S
J T O N A E L C A R D S I E Y
E O A F A L S L A E M S I C L
K C U T F L L S P A N R T O I
K W N R I E P R E E E T F R M
I D A A N D E L Y S R T G A A
N R N R D A E P E X X A N T F
S O N X D G L M P E L L I E A
T W O A O U A A T V I K M S C
A R Z L S G P U T W X S A S E
G E A E D S O E S D I K E E B
R D M R W K L D E R I T R H O
A N A E R P U Z Z L E S T C O
M O N O P O L Y P E E L S E K
B W W A N O I T C I R T S E R

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6/1

Amazon, Apple TV, Arts, Board Games, Call, Cards, Chess, Clean, Coffee, Cook, Dance, Decorate, Disney Plus, Draw, Facebook, Family, Instagram, Journal, Kids, Lego, Meals, Meditate, Monopoly, Nails, Naps, Newspaper, Plant, Puzzles, Read, Relax, Restriction, Scrabble, Series, Sleep, Snack, Streaming, Talks, Text, Tired, Twitter, Wonderword, Workout

Last Friday's Answer: Reproduce

To purchase WONDERWORD books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

GMs favor 20 or more teams in playoffs



NEW YORK— While general managers are split on how the NBA should proceed with the 2020 season, there is one factor that most teams agree on: expanding the playoff field.

In a survey sent to NBA GMs this week, 83% (25 of 30) of them voted in favor of a "Playoffs Plus" format that would have 20 or more teams in the playoffs, according to Shams Charania. However, the 30 GMs were split on whether to maintain the traditional playoff seeding (53%) or to reseed the field (47%), presumably from 1-20 based on the overall league standings.

The traditional NBA's playoff format has 16 team bracket with eight teams from each conference. A format that has been in place since 1984. Adding four teams, whether the four best teams outside the playoffs or two from either conference would make the largest playoff field ever.

Expanding the playoff field would be similar to the NHL's return to play plan which had the top 12 teams in both conferences advancing straight to the playoffs. The NBA is considering a play-in format to include New Orleans, Portland, San Antonio and Sacramento—all Western Conference teams—according to ESPN.

Other details seem to have less of a consensus from the decision-makers of each franchise; 53% (16) GMs want to advance directly to the NBA playoffs; 27% (8) would like an abbreviated season with a play-in; 60% (18) were in favor of a 72-game season; all teams had completed 63-67 games before the stoppage; non-playoff teams were split on resuming the season; most GMs wanted the season to conclude by Oct. 1; they wanted a larger roster or more flexibility when play resumes.

None of the results of the survey are set in stone. Merely they were used to gauge opinions from each team. NBA Commissioner Adam Silver will talk with the league's board of governors to discuss formats and a potential timeline on Friday.

The Wizards are currently the ninth seed in the Eastern Conference and 5.5 games out of the standard final playoff spot. In terms of the league standings, they have the 22nd-best record in the NBA.

Possible July 31 restart

NBA fans can rejoice, because the league finally has a date in mind to restart the season. Silver informed the Board of Governors the league is looking at a July 31 start date.



AP
In this Feb. 25, 2020 file photo, Milwaukee Bucks forward Giannis Antetokounmpo, left, grabs the ball next to Toronto Raptors' Fred VanVleet, middle, and Terence Davis (0) during the second half of an NBA game in Toronto. The NBA is targeting a restart on July 31.

workouts before setting a date for a training camp that would precede the resumption of the season.

Details of what the league's testing plan would be are also somewhat unclear, though it's almost certain that any program would involve all players and staff being checked very regularly and possibly even daily once the season resumes.

Another very big issue is money.

The NBA has the right, per the Collective Bargaining Agreement, to exercise a clause and recoup roughly 1.08% of each player's salary for every regular-season game that is canceled for unforeseen circumstances such as a pandemic. The NBPA has not responded to requests for comment on how the financial implications of lost games would affect players.

But if some teams are not brought back when the season resumes and more regular season games are played, then it would seem possible for some players could lose a much larger percentage of their salary than others would. (AP/NBC)

That news doesn't guarantee the NBA will be back playing games on July 31, but it gives fans an idea of when the NBA is looking to resume its season.

Both the league and its players still need to agree on details regarding the season's restart. The NBA is expected to have a plan to resume its season approved by owners at a vote on Thursday, June 4, according to Adrian Wojnarowski.

The league is reportedly looking into a bubble plan, which would keep all players and teams in one centralized location. Orlando is considered a frontrunner to be that location. The league has had conversations with Disney focused on using Disney's ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex in Florida to host games.

Given the league's known hope to be back on the court by the end of July, Silver's decision would likely have to come very soon. Not all team practice facilities have reopened for voluntary workouts, meaning there could be some players who haven't done any on-court work since the league suspended the season on March 11 in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Jared Dudley of the Los Angeles Lakers wrote on Twitter that Silver has said the season could go into early October before finishing, and added that a later start to next season gives "more time to (potentially) have some sort of fans"

back in the stands.

The New York Knicks and Washington Wizards opened their facilities Friday for the first time since the shutdown started, and the Boston Celtics said they will do the same on

Monday. The only teams left at this point without a known reopening plan for their practice facilities are Detroit, San Antonio and Golden State.

Teams that are open can have a maximum of four play-

ers in a facility simultaneously at this point, with none of them allowed to work out together or even play 1-on-1. The belief has been that the league will ramp up what's allowed within the voluntary

US Open plans group flights, COVID tests

NEW YORK (AP)—Charter flights to ferry U.S. Open tennis players and limited entourages from Europe, South America and the Middle East to New York. Negative COVID-19 tests before traveling. Centralized housing. Daily temperature checks.

No spectators. Fewer on-court officials. No locker-room access on practice days.

All are among the scenarios being considered for the 2020 U.S. Open—if it is held at all amid the coronavirus pandemic—and described to The Associated Press by a high-ranking official at the Grand Slam tournament.

"All of this is still fluid," Stacey Allaster, the U.S. Tennis Association's chief executive for professional tennis, said in a telephone interview Saturday. "We have made no decisions at all."

With that caveat, Allaster added that if the USTA board does decide to go forward with the Open, she expects it to be held at its usual site and in its usual spot on the calendar. The main draw is sched-

uled to start Aug. 31.

"We continue to be, I would say, 150% focused on staging a safe environment for conducting a U.S. Open at the Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in New York on our dates. It's all I wake up—our team wakes up—thinking about," Allaster said. "The idea of an alternative venue, an alternative date ... we've got a responsibility to explore it, but it doesn't have a lot of momentum."

An announcement should come from "mid-June to end of June," Allaster said.

All sanctioned competition has been suspended by the ATP, WTA and International Tennis Federation since March and is on hold until late July.

The French Open was postponed from May to September; Wimbledon was canceled for the first time since 1945.

There is no established COVID-19 protocol for tennis, a global sport with several governing bodies.

"Everybody would agree to the fundamental principles, I'm sure: protecting the health of participants, following the local laws and minimizing the risk of the transmission of the virus," said Stuart Miller, who is overseeing the ITF's return-to-tennis policy. "But then you have to get down into the specific details."

One such detail: The USTA wants to add locker rooms—including at indoor courts that housed hundreds of temporary hospital beds at the height of New York's coronavirus outbreak—and improve air filtration in existing spaces. Also being considered: no locker-room access until just before a match.

So if anyone goes to Flushing Meadows just to train, Allaster said, "You come, you practice, and return to the hotel."

The USTA presented its operational plan to a medical advisory group Friday; now that will be discussed with city, state and federal government officials.

"The fundamental goal here is to mitigate risk," Allaster said.

Governors around the country, such as New York's Andrew Cuomo, who are open to allowing professional sports resume say that should be without fans.

"We are spending a lot of time and energy on all the models, including no fans on site," Allaster said. "The government will help guide us."

In 2019, about 850,000 people attended the U.S. Open site from the week before the main draw through the finals.

Lew Sherr, the USTA's chief revenue officer, told the AP it is "less and less likely" spectators would be at the U.S. Open this year.

That, Sherr said, means "forgoing ticketing revenue, forgoing hospitality revenue, forgoing a portion of your sponsorship revenue." But TV and digital rights fees, plus remaining sponsorship dollars, are "significant enough that it's still worth it to go forward with a no-fans-on-site U.S. Open," he said.



'Clubs may sign Kap if they choose to do so'



MINNESOTA—Colin Kaepernick hasn't played in the NFL for three seasons, and former league executive Joe Lockhart has finally confirmed why: His kneeling protests during the national anthem were "controversial, and, therefore, bad for business."

Kaepernick was protesting police brutality against black people and people of color, a persistent problem which has come up numerous times over the past week as athletes speak out against the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis police custody. Lockhart's column on CNN.com implores the Minnesota Vikings to sign Kaepernick and right the wrong that was committed three years ago when Kaepernick was essentially blackballed from the league.

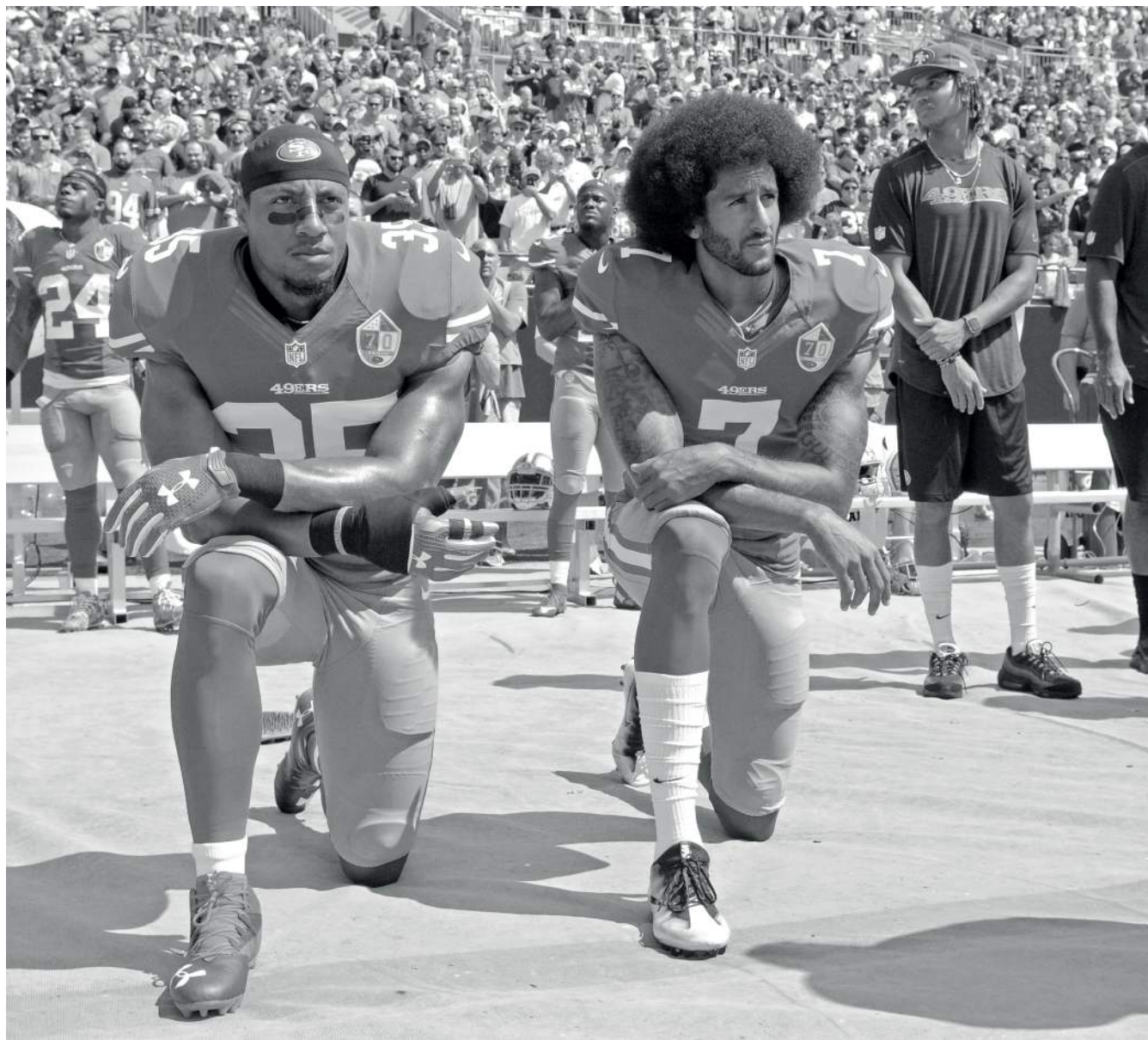
The NFL, always defensive whenever Kaepernick is mentioned, responded to Lockhart's column on Saturday afternoon through spokesman Mike McCarthy.

"Colin is a free agent," McCarthy said, via ProFootballTalk. "Clubs may sign him if they choose to do so."

Well then.

McCarthy also called attention to the update the NFL's VP of social responsibility, Anna Isaacson, gave to owners and reporters this week on the progress of the league's social justice initiative.

"Today we covered several updates on our Inspire Change social justice initiative. Firstly, it's important to know this work remains at the top of our priority list and has been a continued focus even throughout the offseason. Recent events across the country make it even clearer how much more work needs to be done. We recently announced we surpassed \$44 million in funding



In this Sept. 18, 2016 file photo, San Francisco 49ers' Colin Kaepernick (7) and Eric Reid (35) kneel during the national anthem before an NFL game against the Carolina Panthers in Charlotte, N.C.

along with a new set of national grants and grant renewals to non-profit organizations that really do the real work on the ground in our key focus areas of education, economic advancements, community and police relations and criminal justice reform. The \$44 million also includes more than 750 matching grants on behalf of players and legends who have personally supported local, social justice organizations, for more than 360 distinct organizations that have served more than 600,000 people in just the last two years alone," Isaacson said.

Colts have high hopes on Rivers

In Indianapolis, Frank Reich jumped right into research mode when he knew Philip Rivers would hit free agency.

The Indianapolis Colts coach studied tapes of Rivers' throws from an uncharacteristically poor 2019 season to compare with those he made earlier in his career. Reich saw no difference.

When offensive coordinator Nick Sirianni and tight ends coach Jason Michael concurred with Reich's opinion, general manager Chris Ballard went all in on a 38-year-old quarterback

the Colts believe can make them a title contender.

"I really think he's the same player he was five years ago physically and he's taken good care of his body," Reich said recently. "I think he's at a stage in his career where this is the right thing, this is a great move for him. He's a great fit for us."

There's plenty to like about Rivers.

He has a reputation as the consummate pro and as a family man, active in the community. He understands the offense and the philosophy of Indy's offensive brain trust

after spending three seasons in San Diego working with Reich, Sirianni and Michael.

He even has a resume to back up his trash talk.

The eight-time Pro Bowler needs 60 completions, 2,091 yards and 24 TD passes to move past Dan Marino for No. 5 all-time in each category. Rivers needs 729 yards and three TD passes to become the sixth player in league history to throw for 60,000 yards and 400 TDs.

He shattered Chargers career passing marks, previously held by Dan Fouts, while throwing 44 fewer intercep-

tions than the Pro Football Hall of Famer. Rivers has even outlasted Eli Manning, the guy he was swapped for during the 2004 draft in a move that defined the Chargers and Giants franchises for more than a decade.

But the Colts didn't make this move because of Rivers' past. They made it for the future.

"This guy is a fighter and he's never going to quit. That's what makes him special," Sirianni said. "I get excited about our running attack combined with how good Philip is in the play-action game."

Still, there are questions.

Rivers readily acknowledges his 17th NFL season could be his last. He's already accepted a post-career head coaching job at St. Michael Catholic High School in Fairhope, Alabama. And the Colts invested \$25 million for one season on a guy critics contend is rapidly declining.

Hall of Fame executive Bill Polian doesn't see it the same way.

The architect of Indy's most successful decade believes the Colts followed the formula he implemented when bringing the then 34-year-old Reich to Carolina for its inaugural 1995 season, and again in 2011 when he signed the then 39-year-old Kerry Collins to replace the injured Peyton Manning.

"What you're looking for is a quarterback who can play at a reasonably high level, and when a quarterback reaches a certain age, it starts to get a little worrisome," Polian said. (AP/NBC)



NEW YORK—The MLB Players Association will take its time before deciding how or when to respond to MLB's economic proposal, according to reports.

MLBPA sent a memo to the players outlining its thought process. The memo says the MLBPA is awaiting "key documents" from MLB that would support their call for more salary concessions from the players.

In an memo to players, the MLBPA said it is weighing the timing and substance of a potential response to MLB's proposal that "sought additional payouts of more than \$800M that it contends are necessary to make it economically feasible to play games without fans."

Players weighing response to MLB's economic proposal

The MLBPA's memo to players also states, "importantly, the union still awaits key documents from MLB that would support the dubious financial distress claims the league has made in its attempt to force the additional givebacks from players." Previous reports indicated the players were preparing a counter proposal that would seek a longer season schedule and full prorated salaries. The expectation was that offer would reach the table by week's end.

Now though, it seems the players won't budge until the owners open their books or back off their sliding scale proposal that would pay low-

er-paid players closer to their half-season prorated salaries and force top-paid players to accept 20-40 percent of their normal salary.

To say there's no momentum toward a resolution heading into the weekend would be an understatement.

Once finalized, the players are expected to propose a schedule of longer than 82 games. In addition, the players will seek their full prorated salaries.

The union wants the league to honor the March agreement stipulating that players would be paid on a prorated, per-game basis, a collective cut that already would exceed \$2 billion if only half of a 162-

game schedule is played.

The additional cuts the league proposed in an 82-game schedule would increase that amount by 33 percent. The players prefer a regular season in the 100-game range because they would make more money by playing additional games.

The players were clearly disappointed by the league's economic proposal submitted on Tuesday. Insulted might be a better term based on how some players responded. How the league responds now will be telling. Chances are they won't find a longer season too appealing, but the hope for baseball fans is that it does spur more direct conversation

rather than the back and forth we've seen through the media.

The gap between MLB and the MLB players association seemed to grow even wider Wednesday.

One day after MLB proposed a sliding-scale economic plan, the players huddled to express disappointment and disdain for the offer.

Leading the charge publicly was Washington Nationals pitcher and MLBPA player executive subcommittee member Max Scherzer. In a strong statement posted to Twitter, Scherzer shredded the league's proposal while noting there's no reason why players should "accept a second pay cut" to play a trun-

cated 2020 season.

Scherzer's words echo the tenor of the union's formal response on Tuesday. In a released statement, the MLBPA said it was "extremely disappointed" in the economic proposal, while also stating the sides remain far apart of health and safety issues as well.

Some have viewed the economic proposal simply as part of the negotiating process. Others see it as a league mission to divide the players. If the latter is more on point, the plan seems to be failing so far. Perhaps it's even pushing us further away from a 2020 season.

With time running short, progress needs to be made sooner than later. At this point, a quick resolution doesn't seem possible. (AP/NBC)

COVID-19 affects list of highest-paid athletes

NEW YORK—There are precious few sports happening right now due to the ongoing COVID-19 shutdown, but that didn't stop Forbes from releasing its yearly list of the world's highest-paid athletes.

This year's list features a tennis player at the top for the first time and a change in the

highest paid female athlete, but COVID-19's effect on the sports world is already being felt by athletes—and it won't stop with this year.

Roger Federer with his \$106.3 million in total earnings was this year's top earner, pushing international soccer players Cristiano Ronaldo (\$105 mil-



AP
In this July 9, 2018 file photo, Switzerland's Roger Federer hits a shot during his fourth round match against France's Adrian Panarino during Day 7 of the 2018 Wimbledon at All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club in London.

lion) and Lionel Messi (\$104 million) down to No. 2 and 3 respectively. Messi was No. 1 in 2019 and Ronaldo was No. 2.

According to Forbes, Federer landed at the top of the list after the salaries of Ronaldo and Messi were both cut due to shortened seasons. Federer makes the vast majority of his money from endorsement deals, while Ronaldo and Messi make far more from their salaries.

LeBron James (\$88.2 million), Steph Curry (\$74.4 million), and Kevin Durant (\$63.9 million) were basketball's top earners, landing consecutively at No. 5, No. 6, and No. 7. Tiger Woods (\$62.3 million) was the highest placed golfer at No. 6. Kirk Cousins (\$60.5 million) was the NFL's highest earner

at No. 9, with Carson Wentz (\$59.1 million) at No. 10.

This is the first year since 2016 that two women have made the list. Serena Williams is usually the world's top earning female athlete, but this year she got beat by Naomi Osaka—both on and off the court. Osaka made her debut at No. 29 with \$37.4 million. Williams came in at No. 33 with \$36 million.

The effects of COVID-19 on the sports world were already evident on this year's list. Total athlete revenue fell for the first time in four years because COVID-19 has obliterated the tennis season, shortened the golf season, interrupted soccer, basketball and hockey, and put the MLB season on indefinite hold.

Many sports leagues have

already come to terms with their players regarding pay cuts or prorated salaries for this shortened season, and since salary and winnings are a part of Forbes' metric, that's already affected the list and will likely continue to do so in the future.

MLB has yet to settle with its players on salary for whatever portion of the season might be played, which means most players have been paid just a tiny portion of what their salary was supposed to be. That caused 14 MLB players to drop off the list between 2019 and 2020, leaving just one: Clayton Kershaw at No. 57.

It will go beyond smaller salaries, though, since endorsement and sponsorship deals are part of Forbes' metric. De-

creased revenue across numerous sectors of business means less money to spend on advertising. Athletes and their possible endorsements will likely feel that down the road, and it could change what this list looks like in a year.

Meanwhile, the Seahawks made Russell Wilson a very wealthy man in 2019.

Wilson signed a 4 year, \$140 million new money extension that included a \$65 million signing bonus and \$107M of total guarantees, and an average annual salary of \$35M.

At the time of the deal, Wilson became the highest-paid quarterback in the NFL.

Which for last year, Forbes list ranked Russell Wilson at No. 6 in their highest-paid athletes of the year at \$89.5 million.

With making the list last year, how come Wilson didn't make the list this year?

It seems as though Forbes counted all of Wilson's signing bonus towards last year's earnings.

Wilson was guaranteed \$70 million at the signing of his new contract, which was added on to his 2019 salary (\$19 million). (AP/NBC)

WOMEN

From Page 20

DCCA secured the grant for the mural through the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture and the National Endowment for the Arts and Hunter quickly acknowledged Aldan's concerns. The DCCA head added that changes in the design will be made as soon as possible.

The mural at the Ada Gymnasium is just the start of a series of improvements at the Oleai Sports Complex and its other facilities.

Community's thoughts

CNMI soccer player Ryan Relucio welcomed the new mural, especially at these trying times, as he believes it serves as a sign of hope for the community.

However, he agreed with the sentiments of Aldan, noting that women should be represented in the design, as well as other sports.

"The accomplishments of other sports that are not depicted in the mural, and of females who brought pride to

the Commonwealth should be included and celebrated," said Relucio.

He added that the need to redesign and redo the whole mural is unnecessary and suggested to have murals on the other parts of the facility.

Jeremiah Diaz, a student-athlete, wishes to have portraits of outstanding athletes in future murals.

"Maybe in the next mural they can have portraits of great coaches or players—past or present—in the CNMI," Diaz said.

Halle Kenty of Dandan favored the old mural that represented majority of the sports played on island.

"The old mural really represented all the athletes of Saipan, both men and women. It had a vibrant meaning among all of us athletes," Kenty said.

Maria (who requested to have her last name withheld) of Garapan echoed Kenty's sentiments, but added that "This is a work of art, just appreciate it and how it looks. Art is not perfect." (With *Chevy Alipio*)

STEELE

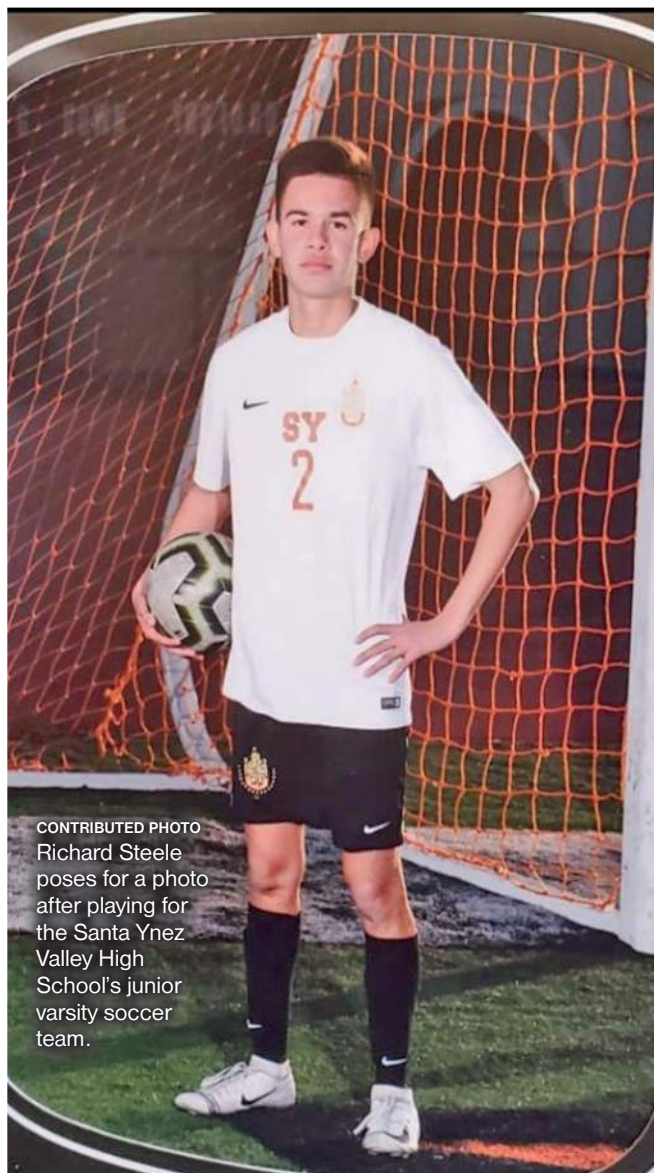
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the years and for preparing him to adjust to a new playing environment.

"Playing on MPU helped me excel in California because I use multiple methods and strategies that I learned from my MPU coaches Johann Noetzel, Sunjoon Tenorio, Oliver Lee, and Chris Aninzo. I was able to use everything they taught me to help me succeed in different environments. I was also very fortunate to have outstanding teammates like Jeremiah Diaz, Rintaro Miyawaki, and Rinto Takahashi, who pushed me to my limits to help me perform at a higher level," Steele said.

Tenorio acknowledged Steele as one of the key players on the MP United U15 squad he and Lee coached last year so learning that the former Saipan resident is still standing out with his new squad does not surprise the former at all.

"He is a very coachable player. I love coaching him because of his attitude and work ethic. He would always listen to my advice as well, and I am not surprised with his



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Richard Steele poses for a photo after playing for the Santa Ynez Valley High School's junior varsity soccer team.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Richard Steele, standing right, celebrates with his Santa Ynez Valley High School teammates and coaches after ruling the California Boys Tennis Classic Division 6 in Fresno last March.

achievements in California," Tenorio said.

Before suiting up for the Pirates, Steele also played for the Kickers Soccer Club of Los Olivos, also in California, and lived up to expectations as he led the group's U16 team in

goals scored with 12.

Steele is on the Santa Ynez's varsity tennis team, too and recorded three victories (playing No. 1 in singles) in their title conquest in the California Boys Tennis Classic Division 6 in Fresno last March.

The former member of the CNMI Junior Tennis Team, despite his busy schedule playing two sports, is still on top of his studies, as he made it to National Honor Society after the first semester of the 2019-2020 school year.



GMs favor
20 or more
teams in
playoffs

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'Clubs may
sign Kap if
they choose
to do so'

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Steele stands out



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Richard Steele poses with the Best Offensive Player award he won at the Santa Ynez Valley High School in California.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Former MP United Football Club player Richard Steele has brought his A game in California as he was recognized as one of the outstanding members of his high school squad.



Santa Ynez Valley High School named Steele the Best Offensive Player of the Pirates' Junior Varsity Team for the 2019-2020 season. The striker and midfielder led the Pirates in goals scored after recording five.

The 16-year-old student-athlete is honored with the distinction, but cherished more the sentimental value of his award.

"This latest achievement meant a lot to me because moving away from Saipan has been a little tough and challenging, but I would always resort back to sports, and whenever I would play I would always feel like I'm back at home. It feels good to know that I'm doing well in a sport that I love to play,"

said Steele, who left the island summer of last year.

Before moving to California, the former Mt. Carmel School student was able to compete for



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

In this May 2019 file photo, MP United Football Club's Richard Steele, right, keeps his eye on the ball, while Kanoa Football Club's Sean Gil sticks close to him during their playoff game for the boys U15 division title in the 2019 NMIFA Spring Youth League at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

MP United in the 2019 NMIFA Spring Youth League and took the Golden Boot award in the boys U15 division after firing 23 goals, including a single game-high seven.

Steele credited MP United and his former coaches and teammates for his signifi-

cant improvements through

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Calls for inclusion of women in mural

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

A veteran athlete has expressed sentiments over the design of the mural at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium, suggesting that women should be represented in the artwork.



The mural at the Gilbert C. Gymnasium will be modified as a woman athlete will also be featured in the design.

ROSELYN MONROYO

The mural featured the CNMI flag, the islands' crystal-clear blue waters, and three sports. However, all three figures representing basketball, weightlifting, and baseball are men.

"In our history, women have been pillars of the Chamorro and Carolinian cultures. We have long been participating in sports in the CNMI, proudly holding medals and titles for our accomplishments," paddler Lorenza Aldan said.

Among the recent female athlete who had given honor to the Commonwealth is weightlifter Antoinette Labausa, a three-time gold medalist in the 2018 Micronesian Games in Yap. Aldan herself delivered hardware for the

CNMI, as she clinched a bronze medal in the 2018 Micro Games and two silvers in the 2019 Micro Cup in Palau.

"As a female athlete and one whose 'playground' is right across the Ada Gym, I would love to see a woman athlete represented in the mural. This is not only a more accurate reflection of the sports community, but also serves as encouragement for our young athletes," the Saipan Paddling Club member said.

"I am reaching out to your office, as the project directors, to please reconsider this design," Aldan wrote in her letter to Department of Community and Cultural Affairs Secretary Robert Hunter.

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